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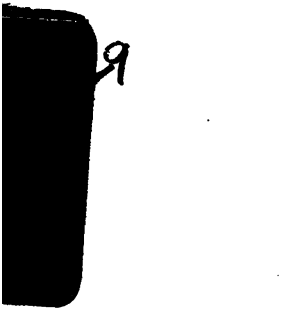

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JAN 26 1917

F. Maurice Newton, Esq.

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S.N.

WOMANHOOD

LECTURES

ON

WOMAN'S WORK IN THE WORLD

BY

R. HEBER NEWTON

RECTOR OF THE ANTHON MEMORIAL CHURCH, NEW YORK

"Ful sodeynly they stynten al stiones,
And knelede downe, as it were for the nones,
And songen with a vois, 'Heel and honour
To truthe of womanhede.'"

—LEGENDE OF GOODE WOMEN

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DEDICATED

TO

MY MOTHER AND MY WIFE.

PREFACE.

THE following lectures were given to young women, in the Anthon Memorial Church, on successive Sunday evenings of the winter of 78—79. Their aim was to guide the aspirations of womanhood for a larger and worthier life-work in the world, by ennobling the ideals of the vocations which call upon woman's distinctive powers. They are now given to the wider public in the hope that, beyond the reach of the spoken word, they may help some little towards the developement of the Coming Woman.

R. H. N.

NEW YORK, *October* 31. 1880.

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WANTED. A VOCATION.

WANTED, A VOCATION.

"I HAVE finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—JOHN 17 : 4.

THIS is the calm sigh of retrospect with which the perfect man utters his sense of completed life-work. He had come into the world charged with a mission—he was going from the world with that mission accomplished. Life's powers had opened in the consciousness of a vocation from the Father of man: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Life's powers were omening the end that comes when the full corn is seeded in the heavy ear: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Death met him with the sheaves upon his shoulder. In the perfect Son of Man all the imperfect children of men find their life expressed, as the flower interprets every unswathing leaf, every swelling bud. He who gathers into himself the full life of humanity, voices humanity's consciousness of a divine vocation. The measure of approach to the Christly fulness of life is the degree of this recognition of a calling to a work of God for man.

Savage life is low, in that it presents little sense of a work given each to do. The ideal of life is loafing,

relieved by such exertion as is needful to sustain existence. The class in our civilized society whose ideal is genteel idleness, though it be the wealthy, and in our superficial sense of the noble term, "the cultured," Matthew Arnold justly calls "the barbarians." They are not truly civilized, for the essential feature of civilization is the associated life in which each member of the body has a work to do for the common weal, the sense of vocation which comes out in the development of mental powers. These brilliant idlers may sing with Walt Whitman, "I loaf and invite my soul," but no soul worth having comes of loafing. The true soul of manhood or womanhood comes as came the perfect soul, whose first whisper of self-recognition was that word of the boy in the Temple, whose musing under the shadow of death was this soliloquy which steals down from the olive-grove beneath Jerusalem.

Life, the highest force, must be, even more than lower forces, motion. Powers of mind and body wait for action to liberate them into forces. Life is forceful action, the outcome of powers seeking vent. Repress, suppress that motion, find no free play for the force that stirs in heart and mind, and that force passes down and out in lower forms of activity, and the spirit life wilts and withers within the body. To be able to do a work in which the best force of life, its vigor of body, its strength of will, its energy of thought, its wealth of emotion, shall find expression, is the blessing with which the Father sends

his child forth upon the world. "He placed man in the garden to dress it and to keep it," with powers for work and work for those powers, dowering him with faculties and constructing for him a sphere in which he should move in happy action. And the divine reward of advancing life, *i.e.*, of developing powers, is increase of task, not beyond but up to the strength; larger field for the greater force. "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Thou hast been ruler over one city, I will make thee ruler over five cities."

The full-orbed life of humanity divides into the hemispheres of the sexes. In that holy pæan of the dying Christ blend the voices of manhood and womanhood, harmonizing in chorded contrast their "I have finished the work;" swelling into unison with "which thou gavest me to do;" the works different, the vocation one. Like the twin stems which Moorish architecture sometimes shows, twining round each other in graceful involution, till they blossom forth in the richly carved capital of the one column, manhood and womanhood climb up together into the human consciousness, which effloresced in Christ, of "the work which thou gavest me to do."

Manhood has been the first of the twin stems of humanity to reach this crowning consciousness of vocation, the first to feel the necessity for active employ, with its physical and mental education, and the first therefore to evolve a sphere adapted for life's

capacities, commensurate with its powers. There are still, to be sure, among our "barbarians," those who have not reached up to this consciousness of vocation, and, as the dawning recognition of manhood's work, we may regard with kindly eye our *doré jeunesse* handling the reins of the aristocratic stage-coach, hoping ere long to see philanthropic business and public life engaging their growing powers. Manhood's nobleness is seen in the merchant and banker, the lawyer and doctor, the *littérateur* and artist, the editor and statesman, the men of active employ in the manifold vocations opened for the sex, conscious in life's powers of a calling from the Father of life, and each seeking to be able at the close of the day to say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Manhood's happiness is in these honorable activities fitted to the nature. Man needs a vocation, and has found it. Does not woman also need a vocation, and may she not find one?

That question I take to be the key to the very remarkable social stir our generation has felt circling round woman. It is easy to criticise and fault it. Many foolish and some dangerous things have been said and done by those who claim to champion the woman's movement. Such erratic action always charactizes new movements. Eccentric and by no means lovable people have pushed to the fore-front of this "cause;" the social Bohemians, whom the latest reform always attracts irresistibly; long-haired men,

short-haired women—unconventional, visionary, enthusiastic, impracticable; the ubiquitous radicals, found wherever the ram's-horn blast summons the social walls to come down. A good deal of scum, and no little of noxious look and smell has come to the surface in this stir, so that prudent people have been inclined to hold their noses and turn away; but then freshets generally rouse up the mud plentifully. Pour fuller tides of life through any social channels and there will follow a disclosure of disagreeables, not created by the new movement, but only brought to the surface to be partly purified in the sunlight and the air, and to have the unpurifiable part thereof precipitated again to the old obscurity in which foulness ever haunts the social undercurrents. This movement has tended to violent tangential action, threatening to rush off from the orbit womanly duty has rounded through the cycling generations, omening confusion and chaos to the social system. But it has felt the pressure and power of laws mightier in their centripetal tendency than all the violence of its centrifugal forces, elastic enough to allow of a wider sweep to the paths of womanly activity while holding them to the old circling round the centre of feminine occupation, the home; allowing no radical changes in the established lines of life. The wise man will not allow his judgment of so serious a movement to be precommitted by prejudice, but will look carefully below its superficial follies to discern its inner forces, persuaded that so great a fermenti

points to some grave wrong disturbing society, some new life struggling within the old conventionalities.

So hearkening to the babel-tongues that plead for woman's rights in discordant chorus, he will find articulated with more or less clearness the cry, "Wanted, a Vocation;" will recognize the reaching out of womanhood unto the consciousness of a calling to some work in the world, freeing the powers now cramped by social conventionalities. In this cry a duet of voices blend, the body's call for a work that will insure the bread which perisheth, and the soul's call for a vocation that will feed the inner hunger for truth and beauty and goodness, together voicing the demand, "a work for life and a life-work," a sphere commensurate with the necessities and capacities of womanhood.

I.

There is first the plaintive cry of womanhood for a fair, free field of labor for those who are driven out into the market-place to compete with the stronger sex in the exhausting toil of brain or the wearying work of hand which awaits bread-winners in our Christian civilization, whose children stand all day idle, waiting the boon of being hired. With this economic aspect of the question I can concern myself here only in so far as the suffering involved and the temptation incurred by woman's wrongs in the working world lead it into the spheres of philanthropy and morality.

Multitudes of women are obliged to provide for their own support—poor girls before marriage, women who never marry and have no relatives able to care for them, wives whose husbands cannot earn enough to support their families, widows left with children to rear—a host vast beyond the dream of those who have not looked into the subject. There is palpable need for an open door to self-supporting work and for ability to enter and wrest a livelihood. We must demand, therefore, that the doors into every sphere where there is work that women can do must be opened, that all traditional prejudices and conventional notions artificially restricting the opportunities for woman's work shall be swept away, and the question of her proper employ be left for natural laws to settle.

And this in no radical and revolutionary spirit, but in the vital conservatism which trusts nature utterly.

For clearly the conventional boundaries of the sphere of woman's work have been drawn by no natural, *i.e.*, ethical forces.

The instinct of selfishness has shown itself, as between classes, so also, between the sexes. Power is always reluctant to share its monopoly. Man has comfortably arrogated to himself the capacity to carry on the higher works of the world, and taken out a patent for every desirable occupation. Intellectual vocations he has held as long as possible for himself, proudly leaving to woman manual labor in the house and in the field, and as society moved on, putting off her claims to a share in the intellectual provinces by unlimited

grants of fee simple estates in the heart. Now the heart is a very noble domain, but scarcely remunerative; its yield not being found in the exchange lists, or its scrip quoted in the stock reports, though there be many a corner made in it with a great deal of breaking.

We must demand further that no arbitrary distinctions be made in the wages of men and women; that sex be no discount on the teacher, the telegraph-operator, the factory operative; that the same amount and quality of labor receive as much pay in the person of the weak woman as in that of the strong man. It is an in-equity, iniquity, to be indignantly shamed by all men who preserve in the warfare of competition aught not only of chivalric feeling for women, but of simple justice-loving, that because she is a woman, a teacher in our common schools shall be offered one half the salary of her fellow-teacher, no more gifted, no more faithful, who happens to be a man. Against the injustice of social opinions or trade customs which holds women back from work they are competent to do, or pays them unfairly in it, we must all protest in every way possible; and then turn round upon young women themselves and demand of them that when they throw themselves against the doors which shut them out from free work and fair pay, they shall carry weight enough to force back the resistance of conventionality and selfishness.

Woman's difficulty in finding work is largely her own lack of capacity for good work, women themselves

being the judges. But that lack of capacity is as largely the result of imperfect education. A boy is trained severely for his life-work, and, if there be any competency in him, when he enters upon it he is prepared to force success out of it. He expects to get his living by his own work. A girl is not taught to look forward to a possibility of self-supporting life, nor made ready for it. Marriage is the solution of her problem, and consciously or unconsciously her education is moulded by the onlook to this settlement. Poor girls slight their domestic training and their factory-work, their telegraphing and their teaching, as they would not if they expected to continue in those positions. The testimony of employers is uniform on this point. The daughters of the well-to-do are educated in the expectation that they will always be cared for by loving fathers or devoted husbands. Parents, poor and rich alike, fail to look fairly in the face the possibility that their daughters may be left by the contingencies of life to earn their own support, and neglect to fit them for success in such emergencies. In the simple works of the household and in the higher tasks of the school, girls are superficially trained; and when in later life the woman has to turn her cooking or her sewing, her music or her literary skill to account for bread-winning, she finds herself unable to command the support expected from her work of hand or brain. Thus it is that in our great cities, as every one who has tried to help distressful women sadly knows, the task is not only that

of finding a work to be done, but then of finding a worker able to do it. Hosts of women are standing idle in the market-place bitterly complaining that "no man hath hired us," pathetically unconscious that no man *can* hire them, save as a cloak for charity; the wretched multitude of cooks who spoil the food intrusted to them, of seamstresses whose work has to be ripped apart and done over again, of dress-makers who cannot make garments fit, of impoverished gentlewomen offering their little accomplishments—fancy-work, piano-thrumming, verse-making—for sale, wondering that no one will buy, and sickening at heart as they feel the whirling tides of life rushing by and over them, and no support upon the wild waters beneath them.

Gail Hamilton says sharper things against her own sex than a man's lips may utter, in her "Woman's Worth and Worthlessness." She arraigns the ignorance, inexactness, and untrustworthiness of women in a very terrible indictment, terrible because on the whole true. Florence Nightingale declares:

> "People cry out and deplore the unremunerative employment for women. The true want is the other way. Women really trained and capable of good work can command any wages or salaries. We cannot get the women." . . . .
>
> "The pay is offered: it is the trained workers we cannot find to be paid."—*Una*, pp. 31, 28.

Even when bolts and bars are drawn, the doors into work-spheres are heavy, and are to be forced open by sheer weight. Brave women have turned the keys of

many an inviting vocation; but no woman will follow them into the works they are honoring who is not forceful enough to push through after them. Women are taking their places by men's side in almost every line of life-work, but only as they bring trained skill, cultured capacity to business and professional life. The question of woman's work in its economic aspect is really one not so much now of woman's rights as of woman's mights. Pretty much any thing she wants to do, a resolute girl may now do; but what *can* she do?

What can you do, my young friend? What power of thorough work with head or hand have you cultured to such mastery as provides you with an occupation, in which, if need be, you can win your daily bread? Do not launch forth upon your voyage without a life-preserver! It is less pitiful to be thrown out upon the Atlantic waves, unbuoyed by cork or rubber, than to be cast upon the world with no means of support beneath you.

II.

"Wanted, a Vocation," a life-work, a definite aim calling forth the full powers of the being, a mission which will enable each one to say at the close of the day, amid the evening shadows, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do"—thus I interpret the other voice in this cry of womanhood. It is the soul of womanhood we hear, below the discordant clamor of the hour, struggling for larger life

within the imprisonment of conventionalities, gasping for freer breath in the vacuous sphere which fashionable life ordains for woman, and carefully exhausts of the elements which feed high life and noble aspiration; protesting against the low ideals held up before girlhood's opening powers as the objects of feminine ambition, the fruition of womanly energies of heart and mind and soul. The uprisings of discontent we see are largely the yeasty motions which tell of the forces of a nobler life liberating themselves in the spirit of womanhood, breaking through the crust of custom, throwing off the inert weight of restrictive conventionalities, aspiring for larger action.

That this is no unnecessary process of fermentation is apparent the moment we examine the ideals conventionally fashioned for young women, and the actual life shaped by custom.

(1.) Society has held out before young womanhood an ideal of life-work which is simply disguised play. A young man has been taught solid knowledge and trained to useful employment of his powers. His has been an education for work. A girl has been taught all manner of accomplishments, showy and superficial acquirements, which serve to render her more attractive in the drawing-room. Hers has been an education for play. She passes out from school, not to enter even provisionally upon any vocation, or to devote herself to any serious aim of culture or usefulness, but to "enter society"—*i.e.*, to take up a life which consists of a round of calls, receptions, balls,

theatres, and operas, a business of play, in which the flowers of the parlor are like their sisters of the field, which "toil not, neither do they spin."

Of course, nature does not contemplate having the majority of young women settle down into trades and professions, having other and better work for them to do. Society's arrangements for young women on leaving school, accordingly, are moulded by this underlying plan of nature, and become quite inevitably a provision for a marrying period.

But surely it does not follow that, therefore, the step out of learning should be, not into working but into mere playing. All will not marry; most will not marry within a few years. To carefully culture the mind for a dozen years, and then in the opening of its power to lead it forth from preparation to real life, and to have that real life prove to be a playroom, is not that a strange method for rational beings who really care to turn out character? It surely ought to be expected that young women, on "finishing," should take up some serious pursuit of personal culture or practical usefulness, as their brothers go into business or a profession, and still leave themselves ample time to be in "society" quite as much as is good for any forming life. But to throw away with the school-books any serious aim, any disciplining work, this is a marvellous sequence of an education for a life which is to have any worth in it.

But even so it is, and the young girl, having duly "finished," draws a long breath, with a feeling that

work is over and play-time has come. Encouraged by parents, expected by friends, she throws herself into the pleasant pastime of society, and lives to dress and dance and drive and dine; and the period of all others in life most full of high aspiration and noble impulse is emptied of all serious aim, discharged of all duty.

Could it be otherwise than that the soul of womanhood, growing into larger life, should press rebelliously against this conventionality, which, in thinking to please, palls; in seeming to honor, depletes and degrades the life it dooms in its best years to frivolous pleasure and ignoble idleness? It may be the unselfish desire to give their daughters unmingled enjoyment that prompts loving parents to turn them out into the pleasure park to run at will; but is there any true and lasting pleasure which does not spring up by the wayside of faithful work? and is it not the height of cruelty to lead young souls aside from those paths of duty where the Castalian springs well up fresh and clear from the ever-living rock, into the fields of selfish idleness, where the waters are such that whosoever drinketh of them shall thirst again in the unsatisfied satiety which is "ennui"?

It may be a chivalric feeling of honor which prompts manhood to set aside young womanhood from toil; the instinctive feeling that the noblest yield of life is not in doing; that "beauty is its own excuse for being;" the flower's blooming in sweetness and grace a something better than the

grubbing work of the rootlets, and woman's happy presence in the home a richer contribution to society than any possible results of her labor of head or hand. But honorable activity and servile toil are not necessarily identical, and the earnest-souled young woman discerns instinctively that to be discharged from serious aim and tasking occupation, under any courteous compliment, is not an honor but an affront. While her brother plunges at once into some real and divine work (all occupation ordained by God's order being manifestations of the life of his Spirit, and so divine), she is turned out to sport in idleness. Has she not powers of thought, does she not burn with high aspirations, feels she not the thrill of ardent desire to essay and do in the great battle of life, or is she only "feebly animal, not yet a thinking being," and so incapable of chording her life with those songs of labor in which the life of the God who "worketh hitherto," through the Son who saith, "and I work," articulates itself in

> "Life made by duty epical
> And rhythmic with the truth."

It may have been in desire to shield her from the evils of the rough world that the young woman has been thus jealously secluded from participation in the activities of real life; but if she be earnest-souled she discovers worse evils in this intellectual harem existence. The pages of society novels tell in many a varied form the belittling, degrading, demoralizing influ-

ences of this mental isolation of woman from real life; picture vividly the petty feelings and carking envies and multitudinous forms of unlovely selfishness which breed in the stagnant back-waters of life where woman has been rooted.

Whatever life may have in store for a girl, she is not, meanwhile, to be discharged from the sense of a vocation, a work springing out of some power God has given her, in whose faithful exercise, should no higher charge be laid upon her, she may be able, at the last, to humbly say, after her Master, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

(2.) Society obstructs any noble outlook of young womanhood into life in hungering search for a true vocation by focusing its attention upon marriage. In a multitude of ways, so minute as to escape notice, a young girl's mind is drawn to one point in the vista of life, her imagination filled with this prospect. Every line of vision converges towards the marriage altar. The holy estate of matrimony is indeed the divinely appointed sphere in which womanhood's happiest and noblest work is to be wrought, the vocation prophesied in her special powers of body, mind, and heart; and therefore quite naturally the subtle forces of girlhood's being instinctively forecast her destiny in thought and fancy, and the arrangements of society are ordered with reference to the crystallization of fluent maidenhood in the beautiful forms of the wife and the mother. The strongest of all attractions ordains that the girl shall gravitate towards wedlock, and

that society shall adjust its relations to facilitate this settlement. But just because nature is attending to this matter, we ought to keep our fussy, irreverent hands off this mysterious drawing together of souls, not anxiously hastening it, not artfully trying to shape it, but content only to provide the conditions for a noble determination of this problem—more far than the mere mating of a thoughtless, aimless life, even the finding of a vocation by the child of God.

Such conscious onlook as we allow to marriage ought to be in serious and earnest preparation for the responsibilities it brings with it, the weightiest that life lays on any souls; whereas we educate our daughters with a view to getting them married, not with the design of making them ready for marriage. Showy accomplishments which render a girl attractive are lavishly provided; but substantial training in the economy of the household, in the care of health, in the charge of children, finds little place in the curriculum of the home or the school; we being indeed much too modest, after letting our daughters read French novels and go to the opera bouffe, to even hint the possibility that they may one day become mothers. So while we loudly proclaim that marriage is the true sphere for woman, we practically deny that it is a vocation, by providing no training for the powers it will demand. The dignity of a vocation is always to be admeasured by the seriousness of the preparation made for it. How then do we appraise marriage?

Moreover, it is not *a* vocation, for her who accepts it, from which she can make her exit, as can her brother from a mistaken calling, to another sphere; it is the one choice, final and irreversible, with no way out except through the valley of the shadow of death, or through shadows darker far. A vocation, therefore, one would say, "not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." In the solitude of his room, with prolonged thought, and not without earnest prayer, the young man will determine his vocation. How is it with our girls? Some blindly drift into it by mere contiguity, the accident of being thrown in frequent company with some particular acquaintance. Others have the whole affair fixed up by some of the fussy mischief-makers who, having failed to find any vocation for themselves in marriage, or out of it, set up to manage other people's lives, and succeed about as well usually as they have done with their own. Or scheming parents go to work to set their daughters up in marriage, just as they undertake to set their sons up in trade, bargaining for the desired price in wealth and social position under the thinnest veils of conventional euphemisms.

Thackeray has satirized with terrific power the marriage-market of society in England, where the season resolves itself into a woman-show, in which the year's development of maiderhood is put upon the auction-block for the highest bidder, without reserva-

tion; where the arts of coquetry, the blandishments of beauty bait the hook with which "the catches" of the year are angled for with consummate skill by pushing mammas and ambitious daughters; where the ball, the opera, the Hyde Park drive, are but different exhibitions of the human goods offered for sale.

The caricature does not resemble our society sufficiently to sting us severely, but it is unpleasantly like much that is discernible here. Marriage, regarded as the only proper settlement for a girl, inevitably becomes dishonored, dishallowed. In that it is regarded as a *settlement*, a provision for support, it loses out of it a sense of a vocation, a calling of God. It is no longer a holy temple, but a convenient shelter. So it will inevitably come to be schemed and bargained for in some way. Society becomes an African corral, sweeping into its net all kinds of prey, driving all lives onward to the settlement which not unnaturally consists largely of broken hearts and suffocated souls, whose wail arises from our unholy estate of matrimony.

That marriage may become all we believe it to be for woman, we must not shut our girls up to it; we must recognize that all are not called to this estate, and that, upon the whole, the best way to determine the matter in individual cases is to withdraw attention from it to other aims in life, and let God in due time call those who are to go up to this altar of the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart.

Let the messengers who come asking you to accept

the sovereignty of some heart, find you, my young friend, as the deputies bringing the proffered rulership of Rome found Cincinnatus, busy, not in weaving the net to draw them to his feet, but in faithful toil at homely work. Jacob is more likely to fall in love with Rebekah if she be drawing water from the well to feed the flocks, than if she be sitting on the well flirting with the young men passing by.

(3.) Society has estopped women from freely seeking or finding a vocation by the unwritten law of custom which pronounces working for pay unladylike. Few pursuits can be carried on in other than an amateurish way without leading one into the market-place. In aristocratic countries the receipt of pay for work still affects the social standing of men as well as women. The idlers of the upper classes look down upon the man who earns his living with a patronizing air. As an amateur, a gentleman may do any thing; as a man of business, nothing. That nice notion of the male dolls has not a long life before it in the old world, while it has scarcely survived transplantation to our democratic soil. But society moves slowly, and even republican America has not emancipated woman from this tyranny of respectability. Readers of Hawthorne will recall the pathetic humor of the description of the decayed gentlewoman compelled to earn her daily bread, yet shrinking from the opening of the little shop which seemed her only resource, as from the final dishonor of the old House of the Seven Gables; and the strange scenes in the early

morning, her furtive taking down of the shop shutters, her precipitate retreat in tears from the light of the rude day looking in upon the array of soap and gingerbread, apples and thread, which signed the family fall, and her astonishing bargainings with her first customer.

"It was the final throe of what called itself old gentility. A lady—who had fed herself from childhood with the shadowy food of aristocratic reminiscences, and whose religion it was that a lady's hand soils itself irremediably by doing aught for bread—this born lady, after sixty years of narrowing means, is fain to step down from her pedestal of imaginary rank. Poverty, treading closely at her heels for a lifetime, has come up with her at last. She must earn her food or starve. And we have stolen upon Miss Hepzibah Pynchon too irreverently, at the instant of time when the patrician lady is to be transformed into the plebeian woman."

This curious feeling of false gentility still lingers out a fossil existence among us, and in many a form this tragic comedy re-enacts itself. Our men shrink from allowing their sisters or daughters to engage in any occupation in which they shall earn money, partly out of a chivalric feeling which is honorable, but partly also out of the senseless notion that thus their respectability is somehow compromised. Our women cling to this worn-out rag of feudal gentility as though it were verily the insignia of dignity. Hosts of women pine out an unhappy existence, their powers undeveloped, and thus the joy of life's fruition unknown, because they are ashamed to accept a real vocation, and, in supporting themselves, work in better than dilettan-

teish fashion, preferring to languish in genteel idleness at somebody else's cost. When women will rise above this silly conventionalism, will take up any pursuit to which taste and talent may lead them, and in it will unhesitatingly receive the pay due for work done, vocations will open on the right hand and on the left, in which life's powers will find a happy bloom and useful fruitage.

In these and other ways society fashions conventional patterns for young womanhood, limiting a girl's sphere of action, restricting the development of her powers, exhausting her ideals of serious aim and noble aspiration. No life is truly happy which does not find its powers opening in the glad consciousness of a work given of God to do. The unrest in the soul of womanhood craves the emancipation which comes to the life rising to that service which is perfect freedom, and in the vocation wanted and found breathing forth, after the summer's labor, the autumn's peaceful sense of fruitioned being, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

III.

If, then, the unrest in the soul of womanhood arises from the failure of so many to find a true vocation, how shall the age right this social wrong? Certainly they who recognize in the Institutes of Humanity a Divine Order will not desire or expect any radical readjustment of the relation of the sexes. They will

look forward, not to a revolution of the present order, but to its development; not to the discovery of a new "sphere," but the occupation of the old domain deeded by nature unto woman; not to the fashioning of brand-new nineteenth century ideals of feminine employment, but to the restoration to their old-time dignity of those patterns of womanhood after which the souls of girls have been shaped among every noble race in every vital age. In the relations every civilized people have found enstamped upon society as the conditions of healthful being, we are to find still the primal callings for woman's faithful work. House-keepers, home-makers, wives, and mothers are fundamental social relations which rest upon woman's characteristics—physical, mental, and moral.

While her sex continues she will not easily get away from these old-time callings, nor will she try so to do if she be wise. Most young women, if they ever realize a vocation, will find it in the ancient orbits, and may well contentedly move round these appointed paths. These vocations are sufficiently responsible and dignified to satisfy their hungriest ambition. To redeem them from neglect and restore them to honor, to fill them out unto larger form and nobler life with the s irit of Christly service, will be to find the vocation wanted, in which woman's soul shall be able thankfully to say when the evening cometh, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

To aid in this restoration should be the first aim of

all who seek a nobler life for womanhood. It is not the glory of poetry that it can fly to strange and distant scenes, and out of the realm of the unknown construct dreams of loveliness, but that it can weave around the common and prosaic fields of familiar life the spell of delighted wonder and reverent joy. It is not the task of religion to call away from every-day duties, in vain aspiration after lunar spheres, but to inspire in the common round, the trivial task of the ordinary relations of this actual earth, the spirit of the life which walks with uplifted head and radiant eye as seeing God.

As the outline of these lectures indicates, it will be my aim thus to idealize somewhat the common lot of woman, lifting it, not out of reality, but above the low level of actuality into the true essential being, God's idea in it, and so help some of you, my friends, to find a vocation.

But all women are not called of God to domestic duties, to the responsibilities of wifely companionship and motherly education, while many who mingle in society feel no drawing to its life, and some who, in lack of other usefulness, engage in the usual beneficences of the church, hunger for other work.

Is there any proper sphere for woman outside these traditional feminine occupations?

The answer to this question, which is so stirring womanhood, is to be found, I think, without any elaborate argumentation. It lies in the view of power which science and religion unite to present. Any

power in the physical or social organism is the provision for some needful function. If nature puts into any member of society a definite ability, it is the sign that its exercise is needed. Nature's empowerings are God's ordinations. Every gift is a calling, every capacity a vocation. If he endows the soul of a woman with any faculty that subserves the common weal, he plainly means that woman to be a producer of such work. To allow traditional notions, conventional prejudices to restrict the free exercise of this gift is to deny to her the calling of the Lord. Whom God anoints to a vocation man may not safely silence. In thus interfering with nature, *i.e.*, God, the worst wrong is done to woman. Opportunity for soul-growth and fruitage is denied her, and her spirit is doomed to barrenness. Among the "rights" an individual may claim of society, room for the development of the individuality stands foremost. The worst slavery is that with which conventionality shackles the soul, stifling its voices, throttling its life.

This, too, is the most stupid folly of miscalled conservatism. In the stunting of any member the whole body suffers. Every power denied development impoverishes society to the extent and the value of its possible productiveness. If over any unremembered dust it can be truly said,

> "Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,"

the world is a Paradise Lost the poorer. No thought burns unuttered, no vision of beauty evanishes un-

recorded, no aspiration wastes itself in undeedful life, but that humanity is weaker-souled therefrom. God knows better than we do what is needed in any age among any people ; and if we are wise, we had better leave him to ordain through whom he will work out his thoughts, and fearlessly own every gift a calling of the Lord. The only wise determination of the vexed question of woman's work is non-determination, the refusal to make any arbitrary circumscribing of her sphere. Said the wise Greek:

"A man and a woman, when they both have the soul of a physician, may be said to have the same nature. . . . . In the administration of a State neither a woman as a woman, nor a man as a man, has any special function, but the gifts of nature are equally diffused in both sexes."—PLATO, *Republic*, vol. iii., 334, 5, Jowett's ed.

The only safe settlement is to leave the whole matter to nature, allowing every gift to find free exercise, and trusting the laws enstamped in sex to regulate the eccentricities of individuals. Mr. Mill is doubtless right in claiming that we are not yet able to pronounce upon the question of woman's distinctive powers, inasmuch as her actual development is the result of long centuries of stunted mental growth. But in seeming to forecast the future woman, as only another man mentally, I cannot but think Mr. Mill unscientific. Mental life roots in physical life. Sex must reach up through the body to the mind and the soul, and differentiate in intellect and spirit the woman from the man. Woman will not prove another

man, repeating his powers and duplicating his work. It will not be easy to unsex her. Nature's laws will hold in utmost stretch of human development, and bind womanhood to the old orbit. Therefore, in the fearlessness which comes of utter trust we may ask that all merely arbitrary and artificial barriers round woman's work be levelled, and every gift be owned a calling, demanding opportunity.

The eccentricities of unfeminine women, who seem happiest when most successful in unsexing themselves, who think to honor their sex by reducing it to a servile imitation of manhood's ways and works, will pass away as the folly of a day.

> "The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
> Together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free:
> If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
> How shall men grow? . . . .
> . . . . . As far as in us lies
> We'll clear away the parasitic forms
> That seem to keep her up but drag her down—
> Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
> Within her—let her make herself her own
> To give or keep, to live and learn and be
> All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
> For woman is not undevelopt man,
> But diverse: could we make her as the man,
> Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
> Not like to like, but like in difference.
> Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
> The man be more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness, and in moral height,
> Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;

She mental breadth, nor fail in child-ward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words."
—TENNYSON'S *Princess*, part vii.

Whatever woman can do, that, by divine ordination, she ought to do, by human allowance she should be privileged to do, by force of destiny in the long run she will do. All old lines speedily rearrange themselves in the wake of God-given power. Napoleon will have no difficulty in rectifying boundaries. Society always follows deferentially after force. Permissive legislation, whether of formal enactment or of unwritten law of custom, soon sanctions all established facts. The world will readjust its conventional limits of woman's sphere when woman has conquered outlying provinces, and not a day earlier. No amount of eloquent denunciation of the tyranny of man, of brilliant declamation upon the capacities of woman, will advance her domain one inch. But every foot she conquers by mastering thought and forceful life, she will hold. Not by babblement of press or platform upon woman's rights, but by noiseless demonstration in deedful lives of woman's mights will the battle be won.

The title of power is indefeasible in art, in literature, in the professions. Every advance that has been gained for the sex has been wrought by the women who feeling the call of an inward gift to some special work have quietly accepted their vocation, patiently and thoroughly trained for their duties,

bravely taken their pioneer positions in the face of social prejudice, and strengthfully held them in vigor of thought and work. It was a woman, weak of body but strengthful of mind, herself crowned by might of noble thought and beauty of melodic verse Queen of English Poetry, who spake thus to her sisters :

" A woman cannot do the thing she ought,
Which means whatever perfect thing she can,
In life, in art, in science, but she fears
To let the perfect action take her part
And rest there : she must prove what she can do
Before she does it,—prate of woman's rights,
Of woman's mission, woman's function, till
The men (who are prating too on their side) cry,
'A woman's function plainly is—to talk.'

. . . . . .

By speaking we prove only we can speak :
Which he, the man here, never doubted. What
He doubts is whether we can *do* the thing
With decent grace we've not yet done at all.
Now, do it ; bring your statue—you have room !
He'll see it even by the starlight here ;
And if 'tis e'er so little like the god
Who looks out from the marble silently
Along the track of his own shining dart
Through the dusk of ages—there's no need to speak ;
The universe shall henceforth speak for you,
And witness, 'She who did this thing was born
To do it—claims her license in her work.'
—And so with more works. Whoso cures the plague,
Though twice a woman, shall be called a leech :
Who rights a land's finances is excused
For touching coppers, though her hands be white,—
But we, we talk !" —*Aurora Leigh*, book viii.

IV.

Wanted, a vocation! Yes, but remember, my young friends, that a vocation is other far than what we, with etymological inaccuracy, but with unconscious ethical significance, call an avocation. An avocation is something which calls one aside from a vocation. And the ordinary use of the occupations of life is really a calling aside from any true vocation therein. To serve one's self in the use of the powers given of God, is to step down from a vocation. To turn gifts of discerning and imparting the true, the beautiful, and the good, to the mere accumulating of money or winning of distinction, is to lose, in this perversion, all sense of a real vocation. Ethically, if not etymologically, the occupations of men are thus a-vocations.

A work from God for man, accepted reverently, discharged faithfully, is the essence of a vocation; the spirit of consecration charging the powers of mind and body. Without this spirit, the most splendid gifts lead astray from those ordered orbits in which the faithful, as they round life's occupations, joyously sing, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

As art has turned aside from a vocation it has degenerated, alike in Pagan Greece and in Christian Italy. As literature has been drawn aside from the solemn clothing in human speech of those words proceeding out of the mouth of God on which men live,

to the profitable trade of selling truth-ingots for the current coin of the land, the prophets have become the mere poets, and the poets have become the versifiers, tricksters in an art whose life and glory had departed.

Man has been lured away by greed of gain or pride of power from the knight-errantry which at the first all strength of mind felt laid upon it to champion human rights and redress the wrongs of earth, and has turned his sword to conquest for himself. Every calling shows to-day this disloyalty to the trust of power; the professions, business, the press, the stage, being all occupations more or less without sense of divine calling.

Shall we not expect of woman, naturally more religious, more unselfish, that as she girds herself to the battle she shall take her sword from the altar of God, and sign it with the sign of the cross, in token that it shall be wielded in the spirit of him whose power was a charge for the help of human need and weakness; that wherever in the thick of earthly strife the poor are oppressed, the feeble are down-trodden, the innocent are wronged, there shall flash the light of her bright blade? Shall we not look to her to use the powers developing in her for purer purposes than those which have tempted man aside from his vocations? Thus shall the fullest fruitage come of life's powers. The inspiration of the purpose will enlarge every faculty, and give to talent the breath of genius. Mrs. Norton saw the slavish toil of the fisher folk of

England, and voiced their wrongs in her thrilling appeal to the thoughtless people of the land,

> "It is not fish ye buy,
> But it is fishermen's lives."

Mrs. Browning's eye fell upon the unnoticed slavery of the brick-yards round about London, the thralldom of the factories crowding the island; her ear caught the wail of the little ones, whose bodies and souls were dying slowly in their daily round of weary toil and joyless work, and her woman-soul lifted up "The Cry of the Children," which shook England with its unutterable pathos.

There are social wrongs in abundance among us waiting to be voiced. That fine ladies may make good bargains, and that men who build up great establishments may reap large profits, your sisters still

> "Stitch, stitch, stitch,
> In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
> Sewing at once, with a double thread,
> A shroud as well as a shirt."

One hundred thousand children are at daily work in and around this very city, from morning until night, the golden hours of childhood sowing for them no joy nor health nor knowledge; life's after-years sure therefore to garner physical feebleness, mental dulness, spiritual deadness, and out of this demoralized stock to plant lower lives for charity's bewilderment and government's despair.

Not in sensational outcry, but in calm and thought-

ful rebuke, these myriad wrongs of society need to be voiced in the ears of a selfish and heedless generation. What woman will patiently find the facts of these social iniquities, fearlessly expose them, and with patient wisdom guide to their correction?

In whatever line of mental work you seek a vocation, my friend, see that it be a true calling of God to the gift you feel stirring within you, and let no secular spirit turn you aside to make of it an "avocation." If you teach, charge yourself with the responsibility of carrying on a genuine and thorough education. Betray it not for glitter or for gold. Compromise not with fashion or with folly. Sell it not for success. Mother mind and soul into life, if need be, out of your own life.

Whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God. The fullest power the world has even seen was under the intensest consecration. Look up to that Master of Life till the glow of his divine Spirit within you moves to action; look around to see what work is waiting to be wrought, and pour, if you can, your strength of love to God and man into that service of need, and no longer of your soul shall it be said, "Wanted, a vocation;" but the melody of your sweetly useful life shall rehearse the blessed swan-song of the faithful servant of the living Lord, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

II.

THE LADY, OR LOAF-WARD;

WOMAN'S WORK AS THE HOUSE-KEEPER AND HOME-MAKER.

THE LADY, OR LOAF-WARD.

"I SHALL be a lady forever."—ISAIAH 47: 7.

WHAT'S in a name? we often lightly ask, it seeming to matter little what are the words by which we distinguish our individualities, the titles by which we rank our classes. And yet so surely as by our ideals, no matter how far short of them we fall, we fashion ourselves, growing unconsciously into the form and lineaments of our best; and so surely as every idea must body itself in a form, our best takes to itself a name by which it shall be known to us; so surely does it become no trifle whether the outward and the visible form rightly clothes the inner and spiritual essence, serving to reveal it as it really is, or to hide it, smother it, cramp and twist it, till it becomes another and a lower life. Every title is the symbol, more or less translucent, of some distinguishing honor or power inherent in the position; originally a crystal symbol, the expression of the essence of that dignity or ability, while the social formations were still vital, the living growths of the living body; becoming gradually opaque, suggesting less of the inner spirit of the order, as the life dies within the new formation, till the names are the mere tags by which

we label our social classifications. The king at first is in very literal reality the can-ning or able one, the masterful man; the office an investiture of personal power with proper prerogatives; the title wholly ceasing in time to name the puny-brained, little-souled creature who by accident of birth wears the crown but does not wield the sceptre, the gilded puppet who appears upon the surface going through the motions of royalty, his every action directed, his every utterance voiced from within the constitutional mechanism. Yet even in the deadest name the fresh life of olden days lies embalmed, and to the word-student the inner essence of the rank it indicates is revealable. Words are monumental thoughts.

The grandly simple title of the old English aristocracy of worth is still cherished as a distinction to which the humblest girl in our democratic land aspires, as in her day-dreams she sings, "I shall be a lady forever." Women are all ladies nowadays, even to the cook in the kitchen. But the ideal of ladyship before our ambitious womanhood is another sort of article altogether from that which won this ancient name—a kind of shop-window ladyhood. All the feminine desire for admiration, all the womanly instincts of grace and beauty, all the human craving for pleasure and power, have united to conjure up an existence of dignified idleness, of luxurious comfort, of sumptuous adornment, of social prestige as the ideal of happiness and honor; and upon this vision has been placed the ancient title—the Lady. The analy-

sis of Esther's day-dreams is descriptive of the aspirations of the sex :

"Her mind had fixed itself habitually on the signs and luxuries of ladyhood, for which she had the keenest perception. She had seen the very mat in her carriage, had scented the dried rose-leaves in her corridors, had felt the soft carpets under her pretty feet, and seen herself, as she rose from her sofa cushions, in the crystal panel that reflected a long drawing-room, where the conservatory flowers and the pictures of fair women left her still with the supremacy of her charms. She had trodden the marble-firm gravel of her garden-walks, and the soft deep turf of her lawn ; she had had her servants about her filled with adoring respect, because of her kindness as well as her grace and beauty ; and she had had several accomplished cavaliers all at once suing for her hand."—*Felix Holt*, ii., ch. 14.

Yet this much-abused Anglo-Saxon word carries within it, to the eyes that will search through it, the truer and nobler ideal visioned in the days of simpler and more honorable life, when rank newly drawn had not lost out of it the ability creating it, and dignity still clothed use. The lady was then, etymologically and actually, the feminine loaf-ward, the bread-guardian, the true helpmeet of the lord, the masculine loaf-ward or bread-guardian ; the guardians of the care of the loaf and of its production, the mistress of bread-ordering and the master of bread-winning. The lord was the man of energy and wisdom to order out-door work so that he and his dependants should prudently gain bread, and the lady was the woman of energy and wisdom to order in-

door work so that she and her dependants should thriftily enjoy bread.

The titles, you observe, were the insignia of rank well won by worth, the symbols of the true honor of manhood and womanhood; man, in all active work of field and farm lording the less competent into orderly bread-winning, spreading his power of wise thought and vigorous action over the ignorant and the feeble as a shield against want, making himself a loaf-ward—the everlastingly true ideal of all lordship; the frightful caricature of which is our modern lord of loaves, holding his power of head and pocket, his capital of brain and gold, as a shield to keep to himself, and from the hungry throng around him, the loaves he has forced his vassals to produce for him. Woman, in all active work of house and home ladying children and servants into prudent bread-preserving, ordering the domestic economy so that idleness shall not consume the loaves won, nor incompetence spoil them, spreading the shield of her wise law and firm rule over her own household and the households forming the periphery of dependence round the central hall, so that the ignorant and the feeble shall not want through waste—the everlastingly true ideal of all ladyship; the pathetic burlesque of which is our modern lady of no loaves, no bread-keeper, but rather bread-waster, neither making it herself nor teaching others to make it, neither ordering her own household prudently that she may have to feed the hungry, nor mistressing the households of the poor around her

into careful habits and thrifty ways, spreading no shield of womanly wisdom over the dull and disorderly, but well warding in herself from care and toil, oblivious of the wicked waste that follows her misrule, that she may softly sing her day-dream lullaby, "I shall be a lady forever."

The true lord is now, as always, the man of might to discern and administer the laws which order bread-winning; the master, in practical sagacity or theoretical knowledge, of political economy—the house-law under which the social family supply their needs and develop their life in brotherly community of interest; the industrial master who, as deputy of The King, rules his people righteously. The true lady is the woman of wisdom to learn and teach the laws which order bread-keeping, the mistress of domestic economy —the science of establishing in every house the house-law of thrift and comfort, the art of breathing through this prose of the family story the poetry of sentiment, till, in rhythmic order, to the music of a sweet, pure life, a home, sacredly beautiful, rises round the soul within the house made vital by her gracious presence.

Every people, in their days of fresh, strong life, have visioned this ideal of the true lady, the noble woman, ruling well her household and inspiring within it the blessed sense of sweet and gracious family life which makes the hearth a sacred place, worthy to enshrine the domestic divinities. Every race, in its decadence, has drawn the picture of the sham lady, the ignoble woman, refined and elegant, luxuriously

idle in her house, frivolously busied out of it with the hollow plays of society.

I.

In Holy Writ we have two pen-pictures, drawn from ancient civilizations, presenting us with the forms of the false and the true lady, under all changes of race and age essentially the same.

While our archæologists are laboriously exhuming the buried cities of Chaldea, in order to restore the features of the social life which so long ago bloomed richly in Babylon and Nineveh, a monumental word has embalmed in the pages of another people the very spirit of that luxurious civilization. Contemporaneous with the glory of Babylon lived the poet statesman of Israel, who, beneath the blighting shadow which the mistress of the world, throned in pomp and power upon the Euphrates, cast upon the sturdy little kingdom of the hill country of the Mediterranean, looked up and studied the lineaments of this splendid despot, and sketched in bold outline the soul that looked through the overgrown body; writing the Decline and Fall of Babylon in a paragraph.

To the prophet's eye the salient feature of this wonderful civilization, which even in its ruins astonishes us, was the effeminate luxuriousness with which the fair city clothed herself in sumptuous garments, and housed herself in splendid palaces, and surrounded herself with every art that ministered to pride and pleasure; using her power over the weaker races with

no honorable purpose of ordering their lives into health and wealth, but only to master them into the wretched slavery of toil upon which she posed herself in elegant idleness; priding herself on no vital strengthfulness of the social body for the discharge of domestic duties, and the development thus of the thews of vigorous virtue, but upon the indolent refinement in which, with her hands in her lap, she sat upon her throne, ministered unto by subject peoples; rejoicing, not in that she was the noble woman, strongly wise, beautifully useful, but in that she was the fine lady, toiling not nor spinning, yet arrayed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day: the sham, unbearable on this earth of realities, which provoked from the robust-souled Jew the satirical apostrophe, prophetically forthtelling her secret sin, her certain judgment:

"Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon,
Sit on the ground:
There is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans:
For thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.
Take the millstones and grind meal.

. . . . . .

For thou shalt no more be called the Lady of Kingdoms.

. . . . . .

Upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke,
And thou saidst, I shall be a lady forever,
So that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart,
Neither didst remember the latter end of it.
Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures,
That dwellest carelessly.

. . . . . .

Thy wisdom and thy knowledge it hath perverted thee;
And thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else be
side me.
Therefore shall evil come upon thee,
And desolation shall come upon thee suddenly."

Isaiah, ch. 47.

Swift-rushing, terrible, came the overthrow, beneath whose deluge, covered by the débris of her fallen palaces, the fine lady lies in dishonored sepulture.

The social ideal is always the embodiment in magnified form of the ideal which floats before the individuals composing the city or the nation, and the fine lady, Babylon, was but the enlarged image of the fine ladies who drove along her avenues and lolled in her gardens, the sham ladyship which still allures in this far-off age and land.

Over against this sketch of the false lady there stands in the picture-gallery of Israelitish history a portraiture of the true lady, drawn by a Jewish poet from a simpler, sounder civilization; Babylon and Jerusalem, the types through all time of the eternally opposed ideals of happiness and honor.

It is the exquisite idyl of The Virtuous Woman; a full-length model of the perfect lady; somewhat antique, perhaps, in its drapery, but essentially the fashion of a noble womanhood in all ages and among all peoples.

"Who can find a virtuous woman?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
So that he shall have no need of spoil.

She will do him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchants' ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth meat to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
She considereth a field and buyeth it;
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And strengtheneth her arms.
She trieth her merchandise that it is good:
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the spindle,
And her hands hold the distaff.
She stretcheth out her open hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She feareth not the snow for her household;
For all her household are doubly-clothed.
She maketh for herself coverings of tapestry;
Her clothing is silk and purple.
Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh fine linen and selleth it,
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and honor are her clothing,
And she will rejoice in the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom,
And in her tongue is the law of kindness.
She looketh well to the ways of her household;
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her.

'Many daughters have done virtuously,
But thou excellest them all.'
Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands,
And let her own works praise her in the gates."

Proverbs, ch. 31.

It is the portraiture of a woman who, amid the prosaic duties of the house-keeper, moves wise and strong; by her presence of loving light and gracious goodness becoming the home-maker; and so, crowned with the noble beauty that always glorifies noble use, bodying the form of the true lady, graced with loveliness and clothed with honor.

II.

Every detail in this pen-picture may well be studied by those who aspire to the divine nobility of ladyship.

She "worketh," not playeth; not being indeed without her delightful recreation and her joyous pleasure, but for the most part finding life too serious to be spent in sport, and work divinely ordered to well up its own fresh zest continually. "She worketh with her hands," in actual manual labor, now as always the basis of healthful, happy, honorable work, and never to be wholly left behind in the advance of toil to the region of thought. Her handiwork is other far than the pretty trifles of fancy-work which often beguile the minds of women with the pretence of occupation; her workmanship something decidedly more useful

than the laboriously wrought gifts for which men profusely thank their fair friends, and then say to themselves,—What in the world shall we do with these things? For "she seeketh wool and flax," the staple articles of clothing, and with these "willingly," not of constraint, but of cheerful delight in her simple activities, "she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." "Dreadfully unpicturesque employment," you say, but yet somehow that which the poetry of the most artistic people of the world always figured as the occupation of their noblest women. The goddess under whose wardship reposed the most brilliant city of the ancient world, embodiment of the loftiest ideal of womanhood, had, as one of her titles, Athenè Ergane, Athena the Worker, and as the symbol of her work, the golden distaff in her hand; sign that feminine skill in labor found on earth, as in the Olympian heaven, the simple tasks of spinning, weaving, and needle-work.

The exquisitely spun web of the spider told to the fancy of the Greek Athene's judgment upon the presumption of the mortal maiden who dared to challenge her to contest of skill in her own special art, and was for her presumptuousness transformed into the ugly creature who retains the old skill of the lovely Arachne. When the beautiful Helen was returning to her forsaken home, she was presented in Egypt with a golden distaff and a famous silver basket, which moved on wheels, to carry her wool—fit token of her return to the ladyship of loyal duties in

her husband's house, in the times when princesses spun their flax and carded their wool and wove their robes for daily use. Ours are no longer days when a spinning-wheel would be, as formerly, an appropriate bridal present; when it could be said, as of Augustus, that he wore no other garments than those his sister, or wife, or daughter wove for him; but the toil of fingers over clothes, or the skill to direct the hands of others, is still not an obsolete acquirement for the true housewife.

With prudent preparations this virtuous woman is always ready for the changes of the seasons; "she feareth not the snow for her household, for all her household are doubly clothed," for winter's cold as well as for summer's heat, and health and comfort are guarded by her forethought. Her own household cared for, "she stretcheth out her open hand to the poor," evidently regarding the ladylike accomplishment of dressing as a very literal putting of dresses upon those who have them not, and as evidently thinking it more humane to make coats and frocks for the poor little urchins who shiver in their wretched homes, their mothers being so unladylike as to let them freeze in their threadbare rags, than to fashion pretty blankets for the poodles that yawn before the blazing hearth fires.

After thus dressing seasonably and comfortably her household and the poor around her, this gentle lady "maketh for herself," in the adorning of her rooms, "coverings of tapestry," such as the beautiful hang-

ings which the ladies of the midle ages wrought, and seeth that "her clothing is silk and purple;" her practicalness being by no means indifference to the beautiful, but only its postponement to the prior claims of use; her plain attire, if she go simply clad, expressing either her sense of fitting garb for homely work, or the fact that she has not yet finished dressing comfortably the unclothed around her, and so has not had time or means to dress herself sumptuously. Which, if I observe correctly, is not always the order of dressing practised by our modern ladies, who being only Christians, and not Jews, in their benighted misconception of duty make haste to cover their walls with rich hangings, and to deck their persons in costly silks, and to hang fortunes in brilliant gems around their lovely forms, and then, being "too poor to give much in these hard times," have to turn distressfully away from the little ones who cower in their dark tenements half clad, since, of course, fine ladies cannot be reduced to the pitiable plight of having amid all their rich robes really "nothing to wear." When she can rightly dress in "silk and purple," the virtuous woman will rejoice to do so, being no slattern or ascetic, loving beauty and knowing that God loves it, delighting to array rich material in pure and lovely lines as a truly fine art, in which her dress shall be the expression of her spirit's grace of form; so that through the outer drapery it shall be plain that "strength and honor are her clothing," and in its chastened grace and noble dignity her rank in be-

ing shall appear, and all shall own the lady "to the manor born."

She mindeth the feeding of her household as well as its clothing, being watchful as well as workful, with her eye on the larder and the kitchen as well as upon the needle, masterful in management as well as skilful with her deftly working fingers; for "she riseth also while it is night," and gets an early start with her establishment, assigning the duties of the day and overseeing them with personal direction, giving "meat to her house and a task to her maids." Neither in the outward society of the state where man is lord, nor in the inner society of the home where woman is lady, will a true loaf-wardship let it be possible that laborers shall stand in the midst of the day idle because no one hath found work for them; it being a wholly anomalous and shocking condition that the "hands" should have cause to say to the head, prove a good caput, or, as we say, capitalist, and plan out work for us.

True economists are the lady and the lord, knowing full well that there is a house-law, an economia, for the inner and the outer family, and that the business of the master and mistress is to enforce that law in all steadiness of labor and thriftiness of care, to the end that none shall want; knowing also that to neglect the care of the loaf is, as truly as the neglect of the winning of the bread, to leave some mouths empty and some stomachs hungry; worklessness plus wastefulness surely netting want. Therefore "she

looketh well to *the ways* of her household," those careless, extravagant ways that are the trial of every prudent housekeeper, lynx-eyed to detect wilful wrong and woful waste. "She trieth her merchandise that it is good," weighing her meats and measuring her milk, and being generally on her guard against the tricks of trade, wherewith, after their father the devil, smart men lie in wait to deceive by craftiness.

By this prudence, which dwells with wisdom, she is able to hold her husband's own, and to help him to further acquirements. "She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard." By this thrifty care it comes to pass that "her husband is known at the city gates," marked out with honor among men as the happy lord of a true lady; a distinction quite other than that which some fine ladies have given to their husbands, who are known in the city gates with a fame that is worse far than obscurity.

In this prudent, managing loaf-ward "the heart of her husband doth safely trust, so that he shall have no need of spoil," will not be driven, by stress and strain of finding means to support the lavish household over which no ladyship is felt, to the forays in which our business lords, when hard pressed, sally forth in some predatory speculation which successfully cleans out a poor fellow's estate or a corporation's credit, and sends the bold financier home laden with the spoil.

With all this busy toil, this watchful ward, she is

not fussy in her working, carking in her care, or captious in her faulting, as your energetic, thrifty housekeeper is apt to be, after the pattern a woman hand has drawn :

"Women who are never bitter and resentful are often the most querulous ; and if Solomon was as wise as he is reputed to be, I feel sure that when he compared a contentious woman to a continual dropping on a very rainy day, he had not a vixen in his eye—a fury with long nails, acrid and selfish. Depend upon it, he meant a good creature who had no joy but in the happiness of the loved ones whom she contributed to make uncomfortable, putting by all the tid-bits for them, and spending nothing on herself—at once patient and complaining, self renouncing and exacting."—*Adam Bede*, book i., ch. 4.

This true lady's spirit smiles her sweetness forth upon the household, having mastered that art of conversation, more truly a culture than the easy fluency of the polyglot talker, in which, having learned when to be silent, she knows when and how to speak the words of gracious cheer and helpful counsel, in the voice

. . . . . "ever soft,
Gentle and low—an excellent thing in woman ;"

for "she openeth her mouth with wisdom ; and on her tongue is the law of kindness."

With this strengthful gracious lady time will wear well ; her beauty being that inner and subtle charm of spirit which grows with age, lighting the paling cheek with glory and mantling the shrinking form with dignity, and her power that which waxes with

the tightening hold of the heart-tendrils; so that her best days will be the autumn time, when the happy harvest of the summer's toil returns to enrich her with that which should accompany old age, the tender pride of husband, the reverent affection of children, the "honor, love, obedience" of the family she has blessed. She will rejoice in the time to come; "her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying, 'Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.'"

Aptly is this pen-picture entitled "The Virtuous Woman," the woman of strengthful, forceful goodness, which energizes her into usefulness and sweetens her into graciousness—altogether a "woman of faculty," as our New England grandmothers would have phrased it, with much thereto added that they might have failed to appreciate; strong-minded, skilful-handed, gentle-hearted, sweet-spoken, graceful-mannered, courteous, wise, and noble, a lady by divine ranking, housekeeper and home-maker; concerning whom it is most literally true, young men, if you happen to know any such, "her price is above rubies."

The rootings of this strengthfulness are found where every noblest life draws its sustenance, far below all hunger for human praise, in the feeding of her soul with the thought that, in her daily duties, she is doing the will of God, fulfilling her vocation. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Her best epitaph will be the simplest record of her faithful life: "Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates;" her obituary, the words which thankful love write in memory of her:

"The blessing of her quiet life
Fell on us like the dew;
And good thoughts, where her footsteps pressed,
Like fairy blossoms grew.

"Sweet promptings unto kindest deeds
Were in her very look.
We read her face as one who reads
A true and holy book,

"The measure of a blessed hymn
To which our hearts could move:
The breathing of an inward psalm;
A canticle of love."

WHITTIER'S *Poems: "Gone."*

This is no portrait to be held up before young girls as possible of exact transcription upon the actual lives of most of the daughters of earth, who, imperfectly educated and unfavorably circumstanced, struggle to realize some such ideal; but one to be lifted high above all caricatures of the lady, and have homage of aspiration and endeavor dutifully paid it.

It is by no means a sketch of the *rôle* for ambitious girls who dream of signallizing themselves in some notable way of social *éclat* or professional skill; not a "sphere" such as some exceptional souls pant for, but an orbit of divinely-ordained duties, within which

the average woman may move in the glad contentment of true piety, which recognizes in the actual appointments of human relationships the necessary provision for mankind's education, perceives in the family the basic social institution, and therefore owns in the housekeeper, ordering the household into happy thrift and prosperous peace—in the home-maker, filling the household with an atmosphere of love, and illuminating it with the charm of the beautiful—the lady.

This, the usual lot of womanhood, because so common, becomes commonplace, and therefore is depreciated and neglected, to the manifold mischief of society; so that I must emphasize for you to-night the importance of this mission.

III.

The family is the primal institute of society, upon which the Church and State are builded. The home is the original germ-cell out of which the whole marvellous social organism is developed. Within the home the social bio-plasts carry on their subtle weaving, and from it throw off the evolutions which nucleate about this central cell the spheres of business and professional life, of art and literature, of religious and civic fellowships. Around the home, as its ensphering outer shell, the cell-walls of this vital social germ, stands the house.

The social organism is thus constructed of a vast aggregation of house-cells, its soundness dependent

on the vital order and purity of the individual homes which constitute the atoms of the larger body. Vital order first, most strictly, and then vital purity; for obedience to law is the condition of healthfulness and soundness in the social as in the physical system. Vital order and purity in the constituent cells of the social body will build up the mental and moral tissue, out of which there will issue vital order and purity in every social formation. Domestic economy will lay the foundation of a sound political economy, and man will prove in the outer world the masterful law-ward, or lord, when in the inner world woman is the mistressing law-ward, or lady. So subtly are the material and spiritual interwoven in our earthly life that the beautiful structure of civilization is builded up out of the necessities of bread-winning, and social science is the outgrowth of political economy; that the exquisite weaving of the spirit's shuttle, whereby there issues from the fine tissue of the affections the pattern of "a better house, that is an heavenly," draws its threads out of the fibres of the daily round of homely duties which minister to the necessities of bread-using; and in orderly loaf-warding out of doors, man becomes the noble lord; in orderly loaf-warding within doors, woman becomes the gracious lady.

That man shall be the successful master of business, that woman shall be the successful mistress of domestic craft, the householder and the housekeeper; the house-band, encircling clasp of strengthful preservation; the housewife, queenly administrator of or-

derly government—are simple, prosaic ambitions; yet they are the warp and woof out of whose right plying to and fro in daily occupations the purposeful plan of God educes the beauty of human character, and brings forth upon the earthly staple the glory of the Face Divine.

The first concern of every people is to insure that these home-cells are vitally sound. Order there will spread health through society. Disorder there will taint every formation of social life with disease, disintegrating marriage, demoralizing business, corrupting society.

(1.) It may seem a dreadfully unromantic thing to say, but none the less does it need to be said, that the happiness and purity of marriage depend, in so far as woman is responsible, primarily upon the young bride's proving herself, in her little kingdom, a veritable lady.

Young people fall in love and marry with little thought of such commonplaces as breakfasts, dinners, and suppers. They bill and coo sweetly as they settle in their nest, sublimely indifferent to all material matters, sure that love is the one all-sufficient requisite for perfect happiness. Do not hint to them that such sublunary things as the details of domestic economy are to affect their blissful serenity. The thought is desecration! Augustus is sure that the presence of Angelina will make any place a paradise, and Angelina reciprocates the sentiment; for are they not themselves, in their wholly unique love, all the world

to each other? No splendid mansion, with its well-appointed conveniences and its duly-ordered arrangements, do they desire—"love in a cottage" is all-sufficient. Now love in a cottage is very idyllic, but if the cottage roof leaks, and the cottage chimney smokes, and the cottage dinners are served *à la cottage cuisine*, how long will the cottagers be in Elysium? "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith," doubtless; but then "herbs," as a daily *menu*, may grow a trifle monotonous, and so its sauce, love, come to lose its relish, and an unreasonable mortal ask whether love and the stalled ox —*i.e.*, good grain-fed beef, might not go together?

I would not lightly jest at the beautiful illusions of love's young day-dreams, exquisite even in their unreasonableness, and true to something more real than fact even in their unsubstantialness; but I would remind young hearts lightly stepping on the aerial heights whither love has borne them, that they are not, after all, above the conditions of earthly living, prosaic and materialistic as these may seem to them from their upper atmosphere, and that the true happiness of marriage consists not in any fondly foolish fancy of soaring above these necessities, which is sure to be rudely dispelled by a sharp pull-down from the clouds to the kitchen, but in such a wise provision for these necessities as will leave sentiment free to wing its way at will above them without consciousness of dragging the cord. We are not yet angels. Every spiritual development rests on very material bases.

Civilization centres in the table, all the work and care of life having for its first aim its due spreading. Reduce the problem of existence to its lowest terms, and it is this: Given the necessity of three meals a day, what occupations and relations of mankind will follow? And the answer is: The social order we see about us. Such is the divine wisdom, however, that out of this first problem rightly, *i.e.*, righteously solved, there issue such immaterial corollaries as civilization exhibits—art and literature, morality and religion, all the sweet humanities and gracious spiritualities. Humanity is a spirit weaving its home of noble thought and beautiful emotion, within its house of material necessities, after the pattern it ordains. Each individual spirit of man sits within the house of common earth, its happy, healthful being dependent on a right housekeeping. High thought and affectional delight and soulful aspiration suck their forces out of a healthful body. They are the condensations of the rich essences a vital organism distills over into mind and heart. Intellect and sentiment and character alike grow lean over a dyspeptic table; lose their joyous life amid the fret and worry of a disorderly *menage*.

The spirit of wedded love may regard the house, in its completeness of appointment and wisdom of management, as only the outer shell, worthless except when vitalized by the heart into a living home; but it must not forget that its delicate life needs sheathing in this outer order of the house—the temple walls

around the inner altar—that its heaven-lighted fire may be guarded from being chilled down by dampening worries or blown out by gusty tempers. The house with its provision for the daily needs of the lower life, duly ordered and graciously illumined, is the trellis within which affections intertwine, and loving hearts growing out into efflorescent richness build up the home. Where a strengthful womanhood keeps the house wisely and well, in prudent care and orderly comfort and cheerful peace, there, in the daily duties, trying and tasking, her character issues in loveliness of bloom and blessedness of fruitage, softly shadowing the household beneath its gracious power and unselfish gentleness; so that the heart of her husband rejoiceth in her, and the love which was planted within those walls strikes down its roots through all thin-soiled fancy and passion into the rich ground of manly reverence and honor, from which to draw a sustenance and life, which shall keep it fresh and green in the midst of years, as those that are planted in the house of the Lord.

On the other hand, a genuine affection may find the experience of life under the unladylike no-rule of a weak woman a severe ordeal; the revelation of incompetence, which even love-blinded eyes cannot but discern in the presence of domestic disorders, may slowly disillusionize the fond sentiment which cast a glamour round the idolized bride; the details of mismanagement recurring with reiterated persistency, unpunctuality of meals, badly cooked food, slatternly

rooms, wasteful outlay, may try the patience and irritate the temper, and lead to hasty words which leave their festering sting behind. In the atmosphere slowly exhausted of sentiment love may cool, and husband and wife separate into chilled isolation; the young husband betake himself to the club, and the young wife to society, and the estrangement widen daily into chronic separation; all remaining perhaps frigidly correct before company, or even as ostentatiously affectionate as the deportment of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Lammle, while the great gulf yawns between them, on the opposite sides of which man and wife walk in unpublished heart-divorcement; the richly-adorned walls of the bridal house standing in monumental pathos over the ghostly relics of the dead home. Then may come that dark sequel of this sad story of domestic infelicity; the home-nest lost, the birds wandering; the wife no longer a keeper-at-home, because no house or home-keeper, flitting to and fro, hungry at heart, and seeking to allay this frightful gnawing of empty affections by fiercely sipping of every pleasure, till, snared in the meshes of some other heart, there is the great temptation and the social scandal; the husband solacing himself in the light of other eyes, till, blinded by their fascination, he stumbles into the ditch.

Would God these were fancy sketches and not pictures drawn from the actual life which mirrors itself in our press items and our law reports! But they are the variously shaded phases of the tragedy that is enacting round us. In the echoes of divorce proceedings, and

of the whispered gossip of society, the very wedding bell's joyous clangor seems to grow ominous of sorrow, as though the spirits of discord, expectant of the deadliest separation which life knows, when two unloving hearts are bound together in mutual antipathy, were ringing and swinging these golden bells in fiendish exuberance of laughing mockery.

I know that in this one aspect of domestic infelicity—and it is but one aspect of a complex evil—woman's failure is mitigated by the exceptional difficulties of housekeeping in our anarchic condition of domestic service, and by the bearish selfishness of husbands; but these difficulties form the test and trial of womanhood, the ordeal for her who would win the noble rank in which, happy in faithfulness to lowly duty, blessed in the victory of the virtuous, she walketh the crowned lady.

(2.) Upon woman's success as the housekeeper rests largely man's success as the householder; her failure in domestic economy endangering his principles and practices in political economy; unladylike ways in loaf-warding leading to very unlordly ways in bread-winning.

Mr. Micawber's secret of happiness is the secret of honor also, a very old though much-forgotten recipe —living within one's income; very literally, as we see in the changing tenantry of our costly residences, a question of *householding.* And this secret is mainly in the hands of the lady of the house. In the division of responsibility in the married firm, the husband

cares for the department of production, the winning of the wealth, and the wife minds the sphere of distribution, the spending of the wealth. She it is who determines the scale of expenses in the establishment, and regulates the outlay from the larder to the library. If she be a true housekeeper in her prudent care and watchful guard of the husband's resources, he, the house-band, need not be unduly strained to compass the expenses of the establishment, but with comfortable reach of income he can provide the necessities of the house and hold it together in peaceful prosperity. In this true lady, warding well the loaf he wins, "the heart of her husband doth safely trust," so that he hath no need of spoil. But the sham lady, who, incompetent to ward her lord's loaf, lets waste consume it and extravagance run away with it, misruling the household, and patterning it upon a style of living beyond the warrant of actual income, exhausts his exchequer, drains his resources, and goads him thus to slavish toil in order to meet the outlay of his fashionable family; and, when this proves insufficient, incites him to leave the honest production of legitimate industry and venture forth upon the freebooting chances of speculation—which might be more etymologically descriptive if spelt without the initial "s"—in desperate hope of the booty which is to be accumulated by the bold raids and cute "corners" of financial strategy.

This is the inner history of many a sad story of these days of dishonor. Our American husband

leaves every thing but the making of money in the wife's hands, and if she be carried away by the ambition of playing "my lady" in fine society, she is very apt to lose alike the disposition and the power to be the true lady at home; and that she may keep up appearances, the household launches forth upon extravagances; and that she may be free to dress and drive and dine, she slips out of personal administration of her establishment, and lavishness and waste render the modest income, which was quite sufficient for the old and simpler habits, wholly inadequate; while the poor fellow who finds ways and means for this costly family devotes himself more and more slavishly to money-making, grows hard and sharp, stoops to dubious devices, and finally, in the pressure of hard times, succumbs to the apparent necessity and falls into some of the manifold forms of commercial rascality which these dark days are bringing to light on every hand; one step involving another, as he becomes increasingly entangled, till at last the crash comes, and one more name drops into dishonored oblivion.

The business demoralization which so saddens and shames us to-day spreads wide its roots beneath many fields of our social life; but one of its tap-roots strikes down into our domestic life, its loss of old-time simplicity and management, its extravagance in the parlor and its wastefulness in the kitchen. With the simpler ways of their grandmothers our girls have left behind them, as antiquated, their econom-

ical management, and the women of "faculty" in loaf-warding are disappearing from society, the true lady of the Hebrew poem changing into the false lady of Babylon, and so our lords are losing all real lordliness, all law-warding power in the world, and a very chaos of confusion is yawning beneath our foundations, threatening to engulf our fine order. This lawlessness at the core of society's order must therefore eat through every outer sphere, enfeebling and disintegrating the tissue of the social organism, in a process of decomposition which, unchecked, must result now, as heretofore in other nations, in a moribund society and national death. Neither law nor religion will long keep life in a people whose political economy is practically corrupt, and every science of buying and selling will become a pseudo-science of thimble-rigging when an unsound domestic economy disorders and enfevers it, and wrongful spending of money leads inevitably to wrongful getting of money.

(3.) Housekeeping is the scaffolding for home-making, and without faithful labor upon the prosaic framework of these common duties no beautiful heart-shrine will rise within the walls of the house. The worst injury a people can receive is to lose in showy, superficial, social life, the delight in domestic joys which creates the home spirit. The ladyless house will generally prove the loveless home. Where no wise watch of the lady of work rules well the household, no gay plumage of the lady of play will create

the beautiful order in which the home rises into being.

Where there is abundance of means, the absence of the house lady may not interfere with the home-order; but none save the wealthy may hope to keep in attractive delight the home, without keeping in careful management the house. The life of the fashionable lady is irreconcilable with the duties of the house lady, where the lord's resources are not large. Comfort in the house is sacrificed for show out of it, and the absence of the cultured woman's personal care shows itself in a host of little signs that the Home-Spirit which nestles in the House Beautiful has evanished.

Young people dare not marry early, when, in order to a home-making so formidable a housekeeping is necessary, and thus, as in England, marriage tends to postpone itself till the young man has made money enough to set up a handsome establishment, by which time the bloom of love is over, and too often the worm is coiled within the heart.

The family life losing delightfulness and preciousness in the house not vitalized into a home, the members of the family seek their enjoyment away from the hearth—the father at his club, the mother in society, the young folks in the places of amusement, and the house becomes merely the lodging-place where meals are served and rest is found, and the external brilliance of social efflorescence represents the draining away of the vital energies from the true root-life of a nation, and decadence is only a question of time.

A healthy home life among a people, the simple tastes and domestic delights which make the hearth the centre of all brightest joys and cheeriest pleasures, produces no very brilliant social flowering, but it keeps the national energies vital and pure. Every best power of a people draws its inspiration from the home. The noblest architecture the world has seen grew out of the reverent love of home and the painstaking decoration of the house wherein the German family expected to abide generation after generation in contented delight; and so this art became worthy to lay its hand to the rearing of those matchless houses of God, *le logeurs du bon Dieu*, which enshrine infinite power and beauty upon the earth.

The brilliant social eras have always been phosphorescent with the decay of home-life. The splendor of society in the luxuriant periods of Greece and Rome sucked up out of the family-life all the ancient purity and strength, and flourished upon the death of the home, to perish of exhaustion in this rootlessness.

Mr. Ruskin has told us the story of the laying of the foundation stones of Venice, in the pure and noble domestic life of the early City of the Sea, to whose stored treasures of art we go, pilgrim-wise, to find one of the richest pieces of work in the midst of its splendid palaces and churches a modest house—sign standing still in stone, of the basis of the power of that mistress of the waters.

A brilliant Frenchman graphically portrays the decline and fall of Venice, and, himself a typical Paris-

ian in his spirit, fails not to discern the secret of the change passing over this wonderful city, as beneath the splendor of her golden era, which crowded the plaza of St. Mark with cosmopolitan fashion, and illumined the palaces of the Rialto with gorgeous *fêtes*, and echoed the plash of the gondoliers along her moonlit lagoons in the soft rhythm of the song and dance, the presence of home-life evanished within the beautiful houses that climb up out of her waters, and domestic delight and family purity were no longer sacredly held the choicest treasures of her palaces; and the acute critic lays bare the rootlessness of this social splendor.

"There are no home comforts; a palace is a museum, a family memorial, a resting-place for the night; . . . in truth, there is no longer any family life."—*Florence and Venice*, book v., ch. 1.

When no virtuous ladies moved within those houses by the sea, no virtuous lords could long wield from the Ducal Hall a mastery over the sea.

IV.

It is even such grave problems as these which rest for their solution upon the question of woman's faithfulness in this homely vocation God has marked out for her. For the purity and happiness of marriage, the purity and prosperity of business, the purity and order of society, the walls of the house must enshrine

the home; and woman move therein in wise and strengthful loaf-warding, in gracious presence of delight, singing to herself in lowly-hearted aspiration after the reality of that grand old title, "I will be a lady forever;" her ideal that vision of perfect womanhood, the keeper of the house of Nazareth, wherein, through thirty years beneath her blessed presence, in the training of her well-ordered home, grew up the life which is to-day the light of men, the divinest treasure ever given to the weary world, the Holy Son of her whom the ages have reverently owned "Lady Mary."

The Greeks had a beautiful myth of the Halcyon, the devoted wife whose earthly home was rudely broken by death, transformed into the sea-bird, ever wandering over the wild waters seeking her lost husband, seen only in the cold and stormy season, when, for a brief space, there is a mid-winter calm, that she may build her floating nest and rest awhile therein, peaceful upon the treacherous waves; concerning whom it was said:

"It is not great, but it has received great honor from the gods because of its lovingness; for while it is making its nest all the world has the happy days which it calls halcyonidæ, excelling all others in their calmness, though in the midst of storm."—*Lucian's Dialogues—quoted by Ruskin in the "Eagle's Nest."*

Oh! that in our age and among our people the myth would realize itself; our men rejoice to build the home-nest, our women be proud to guard it; and

upon life's "sea of troubles" the sanctuary of the soul poise itself serenely; the hearts of men and women supremely happy in the spot where, as of old, "In the wintry months the Father of men gives the wisdom of calm."

Thus, shadowed into form against the earthly house, might rise the vision of that Nazarite Son—in the skies above, "My Father's house," "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" and the dark clouds that gather round the valley of the shadow of death catch a glory from beyond, and pile themselves up into the splendid vestibule of the Heavenly Home.

III.

THE QUEEN:

WOMAN'S WIFELY INSPIRATION AND RULERSHIP OF THE HEART.

THE QUEEN.

"WHAT wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."—ESTHER, 5 : 3.

INTO the presence of Ahasuerus the beautiful Esther ventures, and the heart of the king, enthralled, lays at her feet his power and his wealth, "even to the half of the kingdom." An Eastern story this, clothed in the hyperbole of the Orient; but under it an essentially human truth, a fact of all times and climes. When the queenly woman appears, she extorts from man the devotion of his kingly power, and heart cries to heart, "What wilt thou, queen? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."

To be a queen, to be lifted above her companions into power, to gain some throne from which she can command and upon which she can receive homage, is the day-dream of the heart of girlhood, from the time when she bids her mother call her early on the morrow morn, the gladdest day of all the year, when

> "I'm to be queen of the May, mother;
> I'm to be queen of the May."

The form of that queenship may outgrow the shape of the child-dream, and a more substantial ambition stir the heart of young womanhood; but power of

some sort, power over man, the king of the outer world, power through him over all the things of life, or over all the realities of life, remains the secret instinctive longing of woman's nature. Dryden tells, in one of his poems, the story of a knight condemned to die, but reprieved with promise of full pardon if he should be able within a year to answer rightly the question, "What the sex of woman most desire?" and returning with this answer:

> "'My lady liege,' said he,
> 'What all your sex desire is, sovereignty.
> The wife affects her husband to command;
> All must be hers, both money, house, and land.
> The maids are mistresses e'en in their name;
> And of their servants full dominion claim.
> This, at the peril of my head, I say,
> A blunt, plain truth, the sex aspires to sway,
> You to rule all, while we, like slaves, obey.'
> There was not one, or widow, maid, or wife,
> But said the knight had well deserved his life.
> E'en fair Genevra, with a blush, confess'd,
> The man had found what women love the best."
>
> *The Flower and the Leaf.*

So deep and strong an instinct points to some divinely ordained function. In God's order there must be provision for this prophecy of queenship. I come, this evening, in His name, to show you the crowns His hands are holding over many here before me, asking you to wear them right royally, and show yourselves true queens.

The first definition our dictionaries give of queen is "wife." The real queen is the true wife. Man's power of head and hand rules the outer world, and he is king thereof, having dominion given him over every thing upon the earth. Within this royal life, the "keep," or "hold," of all its powers is the heart. The will which intrenches itself therein holds the command of man's being, masters his strength of purpose and energy of effort, dominates absolutely his every power. Many affections win a partial possession of this "keep" of life—love of parents, of children and of friends, with imperfect mastery of the being. Every opening of the heart in affection is a surrender of some measure of self-government to the influence of the other's judgment, taste, or will.

One earthly affection, brooking no comparison, arrogates to itself the monopoly of the very name of "love," and entering into the innermost "hold" of man's being rules thence his every power with imperious sway. Into the heart of young manhood there comes a woman form, visioning in tender light all grace and goodness, shadowing around her a beautiful ideal which possesses the imagination, captivates the affections, enslaves the will, and the king of earth cries out, "What wilt thou, queen? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."

Even so does the love-possessed man yield himself as a veritable subject to the woman who has mastered him, and, as Mrs. Transome said of Esther and Harold—She makes him do what she pleases; controlling

his possessions, shaping his plans, moulding his very life by her subtle tyranny. There is no impossibility which he will not attempt at her bidding; no folly of which he will not be guilty, if she wills it; no height of heroism he will not scale, if she leads him; no depth of degradation to which he will not sink beneath her downward pressing weight.

What will she please to make him do? That depends, of necessity, upon what she is herself. It will please her to have him do what it pleases her to do. That which pleases her is the expression of her very self. Her own moral weight admeasures, therefore, his place in the scale of being. Her power over him is the subtle leash her soul throws around him. She spins that gossamer omnipotence out of the tissue of her being, and pulses through it her very life-throbs. If she be little and shallow, frivolous and vain, it will please her that he who loves and serves her shall do the things which minister to the delight of such a paltry nature, and all her charm over him will draw him down from noble aspiration, will lure him aside from strenuous endeavor. But if she be a true woman, pure and good, wise and strong, it will please her that he shall do those things in which such a soul rejoices; and all her power over him will master his selfishness, worldliness and fleshliness, and inspire him to seek "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely." Wordsworth has said,

"We live by admiration, joy, and love."

That which we admire we aspire after, that which we joy in, fills and fashions us, that which we love, possesses us. As she is whom we men admire, rejoice in and love, so will we be. Character is far more an inspiration than a manufacture. Toil of discipline and patience of culture may accomplish wonders in shaping a soul; but the uplook of a reverent love to a nobler nature will draw down into the inner springs of the being the forces of that better life, and they move from within in deeper breathings and fuller pulsings of the spirit. A deep, true love will lift a soul out of the shallows of selfishness and the mud of fleshliness when all other powers combined have failed to extricate it from the slough.

There is no power in the fashioning of character like the inspiration of a high ideal possessing the heart through a sweet affection. When the heart's intensest earthly passion idealizes a noble woman, all the gracious charm of her beauty glorifies into irresistible attractiveness the purity and sweetness which are felt in her presence, and a queen rules the life in the grace of God.

Felix Holt, resting upon the ground against a fallen tree and looking up into the face of the woman he loves, bursts forth:

"'You are very beautiful. . . .' She started and looked round at him. He was looking up at her quite calmly, very much as a reverent Protestant might look at a picture of the Virgin, with a devoutness suggested by the type rather than by the image. . . . 'I wonder,' he went on, still looking at

her, 'whether the subtle measuring of forces will ever come to measuring the force there would be in one beautiful woman, whose mind was as noble as her face was beautiful, who made a man's passion for her rush in one current with all the great aims of his life?' "—*Felix Holt*, ii. 3.

A man's love for a woman may divert his energies from the great aims which are before him; may run counter to those high aspirations and dam them up within his soul; may draw aside his interests from the great life courses and waste them in idle, superficial occupations; or it may flood the channels of noble ambition with the freshet tides of a soul overflow, and "make a man's passion for her rush in one current with all the great aims of his life."

That is to make it part of the Divine Force, moving towards the regeneration of humanity—one with the secret of redemption. The power of Christ is the motivity he lodges within the soul. The Hebrew sought to fashion character through conscience, to master it with sheer will. The Greek sought to image in beautiful visions the forms of goodness, and to lift the actual to the ideal by a lofty admiration. The Roman sought to surround conduct with a perfect system of culture, a mighty mechanism of discipline, and to make men good by law. In Christ a divinely beautiful vision of one altogether lovely draws nigh in living flesh, humanly close and real, and steals thus within the heart, and the holiest love mingling with the most reverent admiration, mankind is mastered into holiness. Humanity is growing up unto a perfect

manhood in Christ Jesus, not by compulsion from without, but by propulsion from within, by the power of a worshipful love for an ideal form of beautiful goodness.

A reverent love for one on earth is not something other than this supreme passion of the soul—it is part of it, a thread in the many-stranded cord which draws us upward, a lower form of one and the same force, whose highest action is in Christ's attraction on the spirit of man. Every love is *religious* in proportion to its pure intensity; in proportion to its purity, the measure of its spiritualness; in proportion to its intensity, the measure in which it floats the being out over all shoals of selfishness.

"He was but three and twenty, and had only just learned to love, to love with that adoration which a young man gives to a woman whom he feels to be greater and better than himself. Love of this sort is hardly distinguishable from religious feeling. What deep and worthy love is so, whether of woman or child, or art or music? Our caresses, our tender words, our still rapture under the influence of autumn sunsets, our pillared vistas, or Beethoven symphonies, all bring with them the consciousness that they are mere waves and ripples in an unfathomable ocean of love and beauty: our emotion in its keenest moment passes from expression into silence; our love at its highest flood rushes beyond its object and loses itself in the sense of divine mystery."—*Adam Bede*, i. 3.

Truly this is not the way in which either young folk or old folk commonly regard courtship and marriage. Young people generally regard "falling in love" as a matter for merriment, a thing to giggle

over and banter each other about. Their elders too often view it in the light of a business arrangement, a life settlement, involving as its chief considerations the financial and social terms of the contract.

Marriage may be a masquerade, a Bacchanal, a speculation, but only by the most real of desecrations, the defiling and dishonoring of the "holy estate of matrimony." The worst is always the perversion of the best. Man's deepest evil and his highest good are each in the love he bears a woman. It is his marring or his making for ever. He marries her for "better, for worse," an infinite better, an infinite worse. Destiny hinges, as every dramatist and novelist has instinctively discerned, upon a love plot. For good or for evil as you are, young women, you make your husbands.

O, woman! who in youth's bright days rejoiceth in the manly love laid at thy feet, trothed, espoused wife, thou art throned in that great love upon a life; the orange-blossomed wreath is your queenly crown, and though no words should ever speak this homage, every look of proud admiration, every act of tender devotion, every day of slavish toil voices the heart-cry of the earth-king, "What wilt thou, queen? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."

Wilt thou that I be merely a fond slave to minister to thy whims, a toilful worker, to buy thee the desire of thy heart, a successful king, to conquer for thee place and power, pelf and pleasure? That, O soul of the woman whom I love, in thy littleness, shall be

given to thee, and I shall be of the earth, earthy, as thou willest.

Wilt thou that I aspire after all that is noble and true and good, that I win, not earthly riches, but the gold that rusteth not; nor worldly honor, but the crown that fadeth not; that I aim gloriously and work strenuously; that I rise out of the animal into the spirit; above all selfish love into the love which is one with the worship of the true, the beautiful and the good? That, O queen, shall be even given thee, and I shall be as thou willest. By thy life shall the reach of my being be determined; by thy aspiration my ambition be guided; by thy soul-form the ideals be fashioned which lead me on, upward or downward.

Oh! ye queens, what do ye will?

How shall I persuade you that I am not indulging in romantic talk or pleasant flattery, but that I am honestly, seriously, solemnly setting before you a divine vocation?

If the highest life of the world has expressed this conviction, then may I not ask you reverently to receive the crowns God holds out for you, and wear them as true queens, mindful of their responsibilities?

Let me remind you, then, what the two highest forms of human life—religious belief and poetic thought—have had to say upon this question.

I.

The religions of the noblest races of the world have united in deifying the ideal of womanhood as the inspirer of man's strength and wisdom.

When you read in your Bibles the story of Joseph, the chaste young man, standing before the King of Egypt, and by his wisdom drawing forth the exclamation, "Can we find such an one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" and when you find him naturalized in Egypt under the name of Zaphnath-paaneah, the revealer of secrets, you may not trace the significance of the remark and of the name.

The Divine Wisdom was embodied in the popular Egyptian religion in a woman-form, the goddess Neith, the radical letters of whose name were woven into the new name given to Joseph, who, by the wisdom of this Spirit of the Lord, had become the revealer of secrets, the savior of the people. When, then, you read of the Egyptian king declaring of Joseph that the Spirit of the Lord is in him, and in token thereof placing upon him the name of this enlightening divinity, you are to vision as the inspirer of this pure young man that form of womanliness in which the most wonderful people of the ancient world bodied their symbol of the Divine Wisdom, and, if you will, believe these wise men who through this symbol expressed their sense of manhood's strength inbreathed from womanhood's spirituality.

As, in the palmy days of Greece, the *voyageur* approached the city, "nobly built upon the Ægean

shore,"—shrine of art and philosophy, home of the royal men who held all nations, far and near, subject to their thought and arms—long before the walls of the Piræus were discerned, or the dark shadow lifting itself above the plain defined its shape against the western sky, he knew that he was nearing Athens by the flashing of the sun's rays from the golden-crested helmet and the golden-tipped spear of the colossal figure which rose proudly over the roof of the Parthenon upon the rocky Acropolis, in honor of the guardian spirit of that city of kings, the personification of the Divine Wisdom, in form as of the ideal of womanliness, the virgin goddess Athenè. Above the artists and philosophers, the poets and statesmen, who mingled in the tides of noble human life that rose and fell in that world-famous Agora, stood ever this form of the divine woman-power after whom the city was named; silent symbol of the worshipful love of womanhood in which all noble manliness roots itself. It was no whim which singled out Athenè from the host of divinities who filled the ideal upper world of Greece, and placed her as tutelary genius over the most glorious city the world has ever had. That city became classic because in very deed and truth the men of Athens were, in the beginning, worshippers of Athenè, of the ideal of noble womanhood. This could only have been because, upon the whole, women were true and good; mothers and wives and daughters lifting above men a vision of all that is "pure womanly" which drew forth their homage, and be-

came their inspiration to purity and honor. Abstract womanhood was the image into which the Greek cast his vision of the Divine Wisdom, because concrete women were strong and wise, and made the forces of his life rush in one current with his highest aims. This heavenly goddess bore in her ideal glory the form and shape of the simple, noble women whom Homer drew upon the earth; and while for defence of home and hearth she bore the sword and shield, for the care of home and hearth she carried the shuttle and the distaff.

Because Athens was Athenè's city, it became the world's mistress; and as long as it continued to be in reality, and not in name alone, Athenè's city, the home of women true and pure and strong, its power failed not, its inspiration was still deep and full; its life lapsing only as this ancient spirit of worshipful honor towards woman died within the hearts of its men, and below the glorious virgin the loose-zoned Aphroditè reared her altar, and the hetairæ who wantoned in the olive groves of the Cephisus and the Ilissus became the priestesses of unworshipful womanhood, drawing down to death the power and patriotism, the art and literature, the philosophy and poetry, the morality and religion of the kingly city.

Homer shows us the early Greek feeling which, later on, reared this figure of womanly wisdom over Athens. Achilles, the typical strong man, is under the rulership and inspiration of Athenè. She comes to him in his gusty moods, the wrath of which the poet sings,

and breathes upon him a better life; and the story is of the conflict between the anarchic forces of the brute life of this mighty warrior and the soul-mastering of the heavenly woman spirit which comes to seek and to save him. Very beautifully, too, the changing phases of the myth confused the Olympian goddess with the air, and Athenè was at one time the Spirit of Wisdom, in form as of the Ideal Woman, and again the Wind, which bloweth where it listeth, the inspiration to all goodness of the Breath of God, the Lord and Giver of Life.

Rome bodied the Spirit of Wisdom in Minerva, the virgin daughter of Jupiter; and the strongest race the world has ever seen, in looking above for power to do the marvellous work appointed it in the development of man, visioned as the mediator of the divine guidance for heroic labor the form of Ideal Womanliness. The same instinctive reverence for womanhood as the inspirer of manly virtue comes forth in the tradition of Numa, the founder of the Roman law—which in its after development gathered into itself the genius of the race, and bequeathed to posterity the jurisprudence by which the modern world still orders society—who was reputed to have received his wisdom from a heavenly teacher, the woman-spirit Ægeria.

Below the myth of a woman-spirit of wisdom, we find again the very substantial fact on which Roman society founded its early vigor, a womanhood wise and strong, gracious and virtuous; wives and mothers around whom gathered the pure family life which was

the secret of strength in Republican Rome, whose names still live to charm our daughters to noble womanliness.

Do not turn away from these venerable symbols of the reverent homage the wisest and strongest races of the world paid to the Ideal Womanhood, saying—These were only Pagan idolatries. Idolatries certainly they became, as the symbols grew opaque in the declining light of national life and no inner and spiritual reality of the unutterable mystery shone through them, and the shapes themselves—Neith, Athenè, Minerva—became the objects of worship. But even such idolatries do all symbol-worships tend to become, in Christian churches as well as in Pagan temples.

Pagan forms they were, the shaping and clothing of the human thought determined by the conditions of knowledge and life in Thebes and Athens and Rome; but the thoughts, the ideas, were *human*, the outcome of an instinct in all men as men, so that manhood, even in Biblical history, fashions the form of the Divine Wisdom in feminine guise, casts a superhuman shape of womanly loveliness as the inspirer of goodness, and hearkening diligently to the whispers within of this heavenly guide says always, "*She* uttereth *her* voice." The Hebrew had the same vision which appeared to Egyptian and Greek and Roman, as you will find in your Bibles, in the sublime image of Wisdom which shadowed her form upon the mind of the wisest man of Israel.

"Doth not Wisdom cry?
And understanding put forth her voice?
She standeth in the top of high places,
By the way in the places of the paths.
She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city,
At the coming in of the doors.
Unto you, O men, I call;
And my voice is to the sons of man.

. . . . . .

Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom:
I am understanding; I have strength.
By me kings reign,
And princes decree justice.
By me princes rule,
And nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

. . . . . .

I lead in the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of judgment.

. . . . . .

Blessed is the man that heareth me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at the posts of my doors.
For whoso findeth me findeth life,
And shall obtain favor of the Lord.
But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul."
Proverbs, ch. viii.

Christianity has denied the fatal folly of those champions, who, to prove it divine, would disprove it human, and has shown that it sucked its life out of the deep springs below humanity by reproducing the forms of thought and life which man's instincts have everywhere developed—the ideals which among all

races have inspired noble being. Christendom has accordingly not been without this same ideal form of Womanliness as the inspiration of manly life. The most prominent figure in mediæval Christendom was a Woman-form, in whom all grace of being, and all purity of life, all wisdom to guide, and all power to help rose over the coarse, hard life of the Middle Ages, winning the prayers and praises of men. To the Holy Madonna the peasant lifted his supplication; from her the king drew his inspiration to a rule nobler than that of brute force. The poet sang of her; the painter rejoiced to vision her surpassing loveliness. This woman-worship was, doubtless, a corruption of Christianity, but under the circumstances a desirable corruption. It ought never to have been, and never would have been if the face of Christ had preserved the sweet spirit which made Him the real incarnation of that ancient Hebrew vision of the Divine Wisdom. While the impress of His spirit was fresh on the world, womanliness, as well as manliness, in utmost perfection found its expression in Him, and all the reverent homage to the womanly ideal rose round this gentle, tender, gracious Wisdom of God. As that spirit faded from the face of the Christ whom the Church held up before the world, and men saw in Him only the severe Judge, the mighty King, warring with wickedness in the omnipotence of the divine wrathfulness against evil, hurling the thunderbolts of judgment—the womanly ideal, dropping away from Jesus, clung round His mother, and the noble maiden of

Nazareth dilated into the ideal of womanhood, around whom the tender, worshipful love of man gathered. To Christ was paid homage of awe and obedience of fear; to Mary homage of admiration and obedience of love. The Divine Wisdom to guide and restrain and inspire men, always coming down from the heavens in gracious woman-form—for awhile seen in the Christ, as much woman as man—again took the old shape when Christ's face grew hard and stern, and coarse men felt the soft hand laid upon them of a divine woman, and looked up to aspire after purity. As said a Roman father, "How could I rear my boy in reverent worship for purity and honor and gentleness without this inspiration of the blessed Mary?" Below the heavenly ideal again the palpable fact of the women who made themselves the inspiration to that beautiful early age of chivalry—the very efflorescence of the mediæval life—ruling strong warriors into courtesy and gentleness, and breathing upon them till their fleshly passion became a spiritual homage to purity and honor. Protestantism emerged from Mariolatry, not by its learned refutations of the false dogma, but by its unconscious restoration of the feminine ideal to the perfect human life. Jesus grew again womanly in all tender sympathy and gracious beauty, and the woman-soul looked forth from the eyes of the Christ. We staunch Protestants worship in our Christ that ancient vision of the Divine Wisdom which Hebrew, Greek, Roman and Egyptian saw, in fashion as of the perfect woman-form. It is the femi-

lure man by her beauty into wrong, to sink him by her folly into woe, to stir by the feelings she arouses the stormfulness under which Greece wrestles in bitter war with Asia, and Troy crumbles into ruins. The Odyssey is the story of the true and vital love which the wise and strengthful Penelope inspired—power of a soul-full woman in her far-off home to reach out the subtle leash which held her royal husband, amid years of wanderings, through all forms of dangerous temptation, true to the purity and goodness which he worshipfully loved in her; and brought him at the last back to her safe and sound in soul, saved by the watch and ward of the queenly wife.

The Middle Ages voiced its deepest life in one marvellous poem, the expression of all its manifold phases of activity—its political strife, ecclesiastical intrigue, philosophic speculation, mystic meditation—through the rich personality of a man who drew up into himself the forces of all these varied spheres; and who—patriot, churchman, philosopher, saint—was also poet to utter in sweet strain of immortal memory the truths he saw "with sad sincerity" within all human life. To his eye all activities of life threaded themselves upon love, and the work which should embalm the metaphysic disquisitions, the theological controversies, the political enthusiasms, the historical personages of the era, became of necessity a love story. This rich soul, which had known all life of camp and court and church and cloister, visioned man's ascension from the Hell of sordid, selfish, sensual

strife, through the painful purifications of Purgatory, to the Paradise of the Divine Presence, and the beatific vision in which the blessed are forever happy; and the inner force which wove all this checkered story into unison of ascending aim was the inspiration of a woman-soul, his early love, the maiden who in Florence had won his youthful heart; who, transfigured by death, had moved above and before him through all the stress and strain of manhood's temptation, an ideal form of purity and goodness; the earthly passion sublimed into a heavenly aspiration for the angel woman who found him wandering in life's dark forest mazes, set before him the aim of life, came ever to strengthen him when weak and to guide him when perplexed, till he gained the presence-place of God led by the hand of his Beatrice.

Our English poets, more familiar to us all, utter in varied form this sense of woman's queenliness.

Chaucer, father of English poetry, tells of one seeking the "Court of Love" and there instructed in the laws of the respectful, reverent, obedient homage man should pay to woman—

> "Thy lives lady and thy souverayn,
> That hath thyne harte all hole in governaunce."

In the Faerie Queene, the elaborate allegory "Fashioning Morall Vertues," Spenser presents, quaintly garbed, the varied forms of noble womanhood in all guidance and inspiration of manly heroism. The best known of these character figures is Una—Una with her

lion, the storied parable of this rule of womanliness over brute strength. The Red-Cross Knight goes forth to battle with the wrongs which oppress earth under the inspiration of a worshipful love. He comes to believe himself deceived in the woman whom he reverenced; his strength fails him and he falls into the shameful thraldom of false womanhood. His queen, true to herself and to him, goes forth to seek him, through manifold adventure and perilous risks. A lion from the forest rushes out to slay her, and, enthralled by her presence, brute force becomes her slave, carrying her when weary, guarding her when in danger; fauns and satyrs, wild and lawless forms of human animals, attend her reverently till she finds and saves her knight.

"O how can beautie maister the most strong."

What Shakespeare thought upon this question you will now find, by culling out the eloquent eulogies of woman he puts into the lips of some of his characters, for every world-mirroring book—the Bible as well as others, let me say—must reflect all phases of human sentiment, good and bad, and there will be in such books the wisdom of the sages and the folly of the fools. In the unconscious working of his mind you will find his own real thought, in the images of womanhood he draws, and the influence they exert upon the men who move in this shadow world around them. Let one of the ablest of critics interpret this world master:

"Shakespeare has no heroes; he has only heroines. There is not one entirely heroic figure in all his plays, except the slight sketch of Henry V., exaggerated for the purposes of the stage, and the still slighter Valentine in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. . . . . Whereas there is hardly a play that has not a perfect woman in it, steadfast in grave hope and errorless purpose; Cordelia, Desdemona, Isabella, Hermione, Imogen, Queen Catharine, Perdita, Sylvia, Viola, Rosalind, Helena, and last and perhaps loveliest, Virgilia, are all faultless, conceived in the highest heroic type of humanity. . . . . The catastrophe of every play is caused always by the folly or fault of a man; the redemption, if there be any, is by the wisdom and virtue of a woman, and failing that there is none. . . . Among all the principal figures in Shakespeare's plays there is only one weak woman—Ophelia; and it is because she fails Hamlet at the critical moment, and is not, and cannot in her nature be a guide to him when he needs her most, that all the bitter catastrophe follows. Finally, though there are three wicked women among the principal figures—Lady Macbeth, Regan, and Goneril—they are felt at once to be frightful exceptions to the ordinary laws of life, fatal in their influence also in proportion to the power for good which they have abandoned. . . . . Shakespeare represents women as infallibly faithful and wise counsellors, incorruptibly just and pure examples, strong always to sanctify, even when they cannot save." *

Milton, in his greatest poem, pivots the story of "Paradise Lost" on the unqueenliness of Eve. Beautiful, gracious, queenly in form and presence, true consort for the royal man, she fails Adam in the critical moment; and when temptation, subtle and strong,

* Cf. "*Sesame and Lilies*," second lecture, to which this lecture owes its suggestion and some of its illustrations.

comes, she is the first to lose the clear vision of the right, the firm will to follow the right, and he falls, dragged down by her. The closeness with which Milton follows Scripture makes more suggestive the fact that man's lapse from obedience is wrought by the spirit of evil's first overcoming woman, and so turning away her shielding influence from man—possessing her and making her power over him his ruin.

If now, without tracing this thought through the great poets of England, we take a leap down to our own age, shall we find the vision of the olden days before our modern seers?

Let the poet laureate answer!

Tennyson has chosen as the theme on which to spend his maturest powers, in labor of utmost pains, the legend of King Arthur and his knightly court. Whole years he has given to clothing in perfected form these idyls of the king, seemingly only a series of charming legends exquisitely told, in reality a parable "shadowing sense at war with soul;" the world-old tragedy, kingly labors placed before man for the world's redemption from brutal lawlessness, queenly powers laid upon woman for the inspiration and guidance of man's work, the failure of these kingly tasks through the failure of this queenly function.

In the midst of a rude, rough age Arthur bands his *élite* knights into an order sworn to seek the mastering of the human chaos into something like a kingdom of God, under the inspiration of the chivalric reverence for woman; and the high aim lowers, the

noble aspiration flags, the strenuous effort droops as woman ceases to breathe upon man the soul of purity and honor, and, too frivolous for their grand mission, Vivian, Etarre, and their ignoble sisterhood lure men down from duty to pleasure, from spirit love to fleshly passion, they themselves failing because by the side of the great king there walked a weak, unqueenly woman.

The hope of his coming the kingly Arthur thus breathed:

> "Saving I be joined
> To her that is the fairest under heaven,
> *I seem as nothing* in the mighty world;
> And cannot will my will, nor work my work
> Wholly, nor make myself in mine own realm
> Victor and lord. But were I joined to her—
> Then might we live together as one life,
> And, reigning with one will in every thing,
> Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
> And power on this dead world to make it live."
>
> *The Coming of Arthur.*

The bitter secret of his failure the pure-souled hero sighs over the prostrate form of Guinevere as she lies low on the cloister floor of the abbey, whither she had fled to hide her shame, and whither he seeks her out to pour his unutterable sorrow and his unquenchable love forth in one heart-breaking farewell.

> "Thou hast not made my life so sweet to me
> That I the King should greatly care to live;
> For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my life.
> Bear with me for the last time while I show,
> Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou hast sinn'd.
> For when the Romans left us, and their law

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Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways
Were fill'd with rapine, here and there a deed
Of prowess done redress'd a random wrong.
But I was first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood errant of this realm and all
The realms together under me, their Head,
In that fair order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.
And all this throve until I wedded thee!
Believing, 'lo, mine helpmate, one to feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy.'
Then came thy shameful sin with Lancelot;
Then came the sin of Tristram and Isoit;
Then others, following these my mightiest knights,
And drawing foul ensample from fair names,
Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
And all thro' thee." *Guinevere.*

The only one of the Round Table who kept his soul clean, and so won the sight of the Holy Grail, was Sir Galahad, whose secret of strength for his great essay was the power of one pure and noble woman among the host of the fickle fair.

> "She, the wan, sweet maiden, shore away
> Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair
> Which made a silken network for her feet;
> And out of this she plaited broad and long
> A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread
> And crimson, in the belt a strange device,
> A crimson grail within a silver beam;
> And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on him,
> Saying, 'My knight, my love, my knight of heaven,
> O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,
> I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.
> Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,
> And break thro' all, till one will crown thee king
> Far in the spiritual city;' and as she spake
> She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
> Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
> On him, and he believed in her belief."
>
> *The Holy Grail.*

Taking Tennyson to represent our great poets, let us single out two who fairly represent our minor prophets, one from the world, the other from the church—our Samaria and Israel.

Owen Meredith tells in "Lucile" the tale of the brilliant, dissolute French nobleman, who comes under the influence of a genuine passion for the heroine of the story, and feels it as a purifying fire consuming in its

true love the impure lusts which had defiled his being, and liberating a new and nobler nature.

> "Do not deem, O Lucile!
> That the love I no longer have strength to conceal
> Is a passing caprice! It is strange to my nature.
> It has made me, unknown to myself, a new creature.
> I implore you to sanction and save the new life
> Which I lay at your feet with this prayer—Be my wife!
> Stoop and raise me!"

His love unreturned, the lower nature roused to its deepest stormfulness of defiance in this reaction from the better life brightly opening upon him, he throws himself anew into the old, low pleasures, till again, in the eddies of life, he is cast into the presence of the woman who had some years before roused a soul in him, herself sorely schooled by heart-sorrow into nobler being. Again the soul of the man starts from its living death beneath the influence of this woman-soul. In bitter words of despair he upbraids her with the wreck she has made of him, the possibility she opened upon him, the new life she breathed within him, only to throw him back into the old evil life and entomb his soul alive in it, unable, for lack of her new-creating love, to rise out of it, but conscious thenceforth of the living death of sin. Then, beneath the garden-trees of Ems, in the still, quiet night, the light of the better life twinkling faintly over him, her soul breathed upon his soul, rousing his will, clearing his vision, lifting his aspiration, till, as the sun rose, the dawn of a new

day spread its glory over him, transfiguring her who had said the divine word, "Let there be light."

> "He uplifted his eyes. In the place where she stood
> But a moment before, and where now rolled the flood
> Of the sunrise all golden, he seem'd to behold
> In the young light of sunrise an image unfold
> Of his own youth—its ardours, its promise of fame,
> Its ancestral ambition ; and France, by the name
> Of his sires seem'd to call him."

She goes forth to her lowly life as a Sister of Mercy; he draws his sword for France, and leads her armies to the Eastern war. The last crisis in his soul development comes, the final trial of his will, and it brings his guardian angel, his Athenè, spirit of might and wisdom, to his side, to breathe full his soul with strength for his great ordeal. Stirred by her appeal to his better nature, yet unable to accept the bitter cup pressed upon him, he refused the duty which lay before him.

> "Then up rose the Sœur Seraphine.
> The low tent
> In her sudden uprising, seem'd dwarfed by the height
> From which those imperial eyes pour'd the light
> Of their deep, silent sadness upon him.
> No wonder
> He felt, as it were, his own stature shrink under
> The compulsion of that grave regard. For between
> The Duc de Luvois and the Sœur Seraphine
> At that moment there rose all the height of one soul
> O'er another." *Lucile.*

Beneath that divine might of queenliness the strong man's will yielded, and over the head of the Marshal of France the "hands which reach through darkness moulding man" moved in unseen blessing, the Captain of our Salvation feeling round the brow of the victor-soul to place the crown He giveth to him who overcometh.

George McDonald may stand for the poets of the Church, though better known by his novels than by his poems.

In the beginning of his first volume of poems is "A Hidden Life," the story of a farmer lad pursuing his prosaic duties in prosaic frame of mind, uninspired by great thoughts or rich emotions, till one day a vision dawns upon him of the ideal womanhood—looking out from the face of a beautiful young lady to whom he ministers in her momentary need, and who in return smiles forth her soul upon him—beneath whose full-orbed sun the bud of being in the farmer clod opens, and the soul of manhood rises to the light in a reverent love, thinking not to win this beautiful lady, content to worship afar that which appeared to him in her, and to rejoice in the new life which was his silent homage to his priestess of the Eternal Beauty.

Nature now opened to him her unsuspected meanings, as a mind looked out upon her phases, and thoughts high and noble companied his daily tasks, moving aspirations after knowledge and its power.

"God, and not woman, is the heart of all.
But she, as priestess of the visible earth,
Holding the key, herself most beautiful,
Had come to him, and flung the portals wide.
He entered in: each beauty was a glass
That gleamed the woman back upon his view.
Shall I not rather say: each beauty gave
Its own soul up to him who worshipped her,
For that his eyes were opened thus to see?

. . . . . .

Like summer sunshine came the maiden's face
And in the youth's glad heart the seed awoke
It grew and spread, and put forth many flowers,
And every flower a living open eye,
Until his soul was full of eyes within.
Each morning now was a fresh boon to him;
Each wind a spiritual power upon his life;
Each individual animal did share
A common being with him: every kind
Of flower from every other was distinct,
Uttering that for which alone it was—
Its something human, wrapt in other veil."

Seeing, thinking, reading, he passes from the farm to the school, from school to college, guarded in the far-off city through all the temptations of young manhood by that face of womanly purity hid within his heart.

"Oft when the broad rich humor of a jest
With breezy force drew in its skirts a troop
Of pestilential vapors following—
Arose within his sudden, silent mind,
The maiden face that once blushed down on him,
That lady face, insphered beyond his earth,
Yet visible as bright particular star.

A flush of tenderness then glowed across
His bosom—shone it clean from passing harm.
Should that sweet face be banished by rude words?
It could not stay what maidens might not hear.
He almost wept for shame, that face, that jest
Should meet in *his* house : to his love he made
Love's only worthy offering—purity."

He returns at length to his country home to take up his farm life and fill it out with nobler responsibilities, to move as the cultured, high-souled king among his simple subjects, mastering lives into the order of God's laws and their prosperous peace, till death overtakes him in mid-life. On his deathbed he writes a letter, dating it from the church-yard where he soon should lie, and whence these words, till then undelivered, should speak his soul's first greeting to her who had wakened in him the life which is beyond the grave.

"Thy beauty, lady, hath overflowed, and made
Another being beautiful beside,
With virtue to aspire and be itself.
Afar as angels or the sainted dead,
Yet near as loveliness can haunt a man,
And taking any shape for every need,
Thy form hath put on each revealing dress
Of circumstance and history, high or low,
In which from tale of holy life and thought
Essential womanhood hath shone on me."

A Hidden Life.

Lest any one should lightly say that the power of love thus lauded is, as in these stories of Meredith and McDonald, the sway a woman holds who comes not down from the pedestal where the lover's imagina-

tion glorifies her, to the disenchantment of the wifely lot, let me remind you that the strain is but the same which two of the noblest poets of our day in mated lives have sung with chorded voices. The acknowledged queen of English poetesses is Mrs. Browning, and the strongest of our living poets is her husband, Robert Browning.

Mrs. Browning gives us in her greatest work, "Aurora Leigh," a parable in a story; the story, a deep-passioned, world-old love tale, through which looks a parable rich-freighted with noblest truth for our age. The story tells how a man and a woman each miss their best life for lack of a mutual love, in which he, the kingly-gifted doer, would have found the guidance of her womanly insight, while she, the queenly-gifted poetess, would have found the outcome of her high aspiration. The parable tells the failure of man's royal powers of scheming and working in social reformation uninspired and unguided by the woman spirit of strength and wisdom; of woman's queenly powers finding their true outcome not in the coined words of richest thought the poetess issues for the currency of souls, but in the deedful life of man wrought large and full beneath the inspiration of the great-souled wife.

> "God made woman to save man by love.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> When all's done, all tried, all counted here,
> All great arts and all good philosophies,
> This love just puts its hand out in a dream,
> And straight outstretches all things."
>
> *Aurora Leigh*, book ix.

Mr. Browning closes a volume with "One Word More," in which he tells how Raphael turned from his painting to write a century of sonnets for the eyes of one alone, and how Dante paused in his writing to prepare to paint an angel for one's sight alone, and, how even this, his best work, is laid at the feet of one nearer to him than all the world, the "E. B. B." to whom the poem is dedicated.

"There they are, my fifty men and women,
Naming me the fifty poems finished!
Take them, Love, the book and me together.
Where the heart lies let the brain lie also.

. . . . . .

Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
Other heights in other lives, God willing—
All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love!

. . . . . .

God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her.

. . . . . .

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,
Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom!"

This, then, being the uniform testimony of the great poet-souls, what do you think of it, my friends? Are they playing with a pretty sentiment, these earnest souls, whose intensest life comes forth in this homage to womanhood? Are they at fault in their judgment, these prophet-souls, whose spirit vision reveals to us

the realities beneath the commonplace relations of our actual life? No, no, my friends, they are serious they are true-sighted. Manhood cries to the soul of womanhood, "What wilt thou, queen? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee."

III.

That which the religions of the world mythologically express, which the poetry of the world declares, the experience of the world verifies.

The races which have risen to eminence have been inspired by a reverent honor for womanhood, from the early Greeks to the Germanic tribes. In that honoring love the soul of man has found the pure strengthfulness from which came the power that subdues the world. It has been the sway of the "pure womanly" which chained down the brute in man and freed the angel nature.

What the early Greek spirit was we have seen in the shadow of the noble womanhood which hovered over Athens, in the forms which walk the pages of Homer. What the early Roman spirit was, we trace in the relics of that sound domestic life on which the Republic built its world-wide throne. What the Germanic spirit has been, we see in the records of the Roman historians who forefelt in this woman-honoring young race the power which was to rise upon the ruins of Rome and make a better world. The beautiful age of chivalry was the brief efflorescence of this

spirit, youth's day-dream before the hard, practical work of the modern man. In exaggerated form, and therefore in a subtly dangerous intensity, we see therein the spirit of manly reverence for woman which inspires his best life-work.

When the young knight started forth to battle with the wrongs of earth, to champion the cause of the oppressed, to defend the weak, to rid the world of some of the evils which cursed mankind, his armor was bound upon him by the woman whom he loved ; her name was his watchword, and he was vowed to purity and honor in the strength of his devotion to her. It was too exquisite a flower to keep long from decay, but while it bloomed it revealed the truth of life for all the duller days which have followed.

If womanhood can make itself one with the ideals of purity and honor which are in the soul of manhood, it shall so re-enforce them that the flesh in vain shall lust against the spirit.

The most common power, redeeming the sensual man from intemperance and impurity, is the " wifely government " of a faithful woman, in her sad patience shaming the evil that is blighting her life, in her sweet hopefulness encouraging the feeble efforts at reformation, watching over the weak man as a veritable spirit of wisdom and strength, until at the last she lifts the sunken life to light and law. The secret of chivalric manhood and its heroic deeds for humanity still lies in the subtle sway by which a woman soul inspires manhood to unselfish nobleness.

No more chivalric spirit has walked this earth within our day than Charles Kingsley, the very embodiment of all manly strength suffused with womanly gentleness, the soul of purity and honor within the clear mind and the firm will. We who have delighted in his stories are now able to interpret a peculiar feature in his tales by his own life. He seems to delight in picturing the lion-like man, in his stormfulness of powers, coming under the mastering love for a true woman, which brings to her his every power and thrones her upon his life, so that she subdues his mere passion, inspires a spirit love, awakens aspiration, curbs and guides the will, orders the habits and fashions a Christly manhood—pure, sweet, strong. Hereward The Wake and Amyas are his typical men.

We turn now to his own life-story, and find him saying in one place that he would rather have drawn the character of Rawdon Crawley in "Vanity Fair" than any other figure in fiction. Surely not because it is in itself attractive, but because it shows the wonder-working power of a true love for even a false woman, *believed in*, to redeem and uplift a coarse, selfish, sensual man. We trace the story of his life, and the man explains the writer; the "joyous knight-errant of God" has had his armor buckled on him by a noble woman, who "made his love for her rush in one current with all the great aims of his life." No other hand ought to have drawn the exquisite picture of this glorious-souled man than hers who so largely fashioned the living spirit form; the hand of the

wifely queen who ruled in love this kingly man, and in sweet unconsciousness of the tribute to herself crowns her knight's faithful life with that glowing word-wreath:

"Over the real romance of his life, and over the tenderest, loveliest passages in his private letters, a veil must be thrown; but it will not be lifting it too far to say, that if in the highest, closest of earthly relationships, a love that never failed—pure, patient, passionate, for six-and-thirty years—a love which never stooped from its own lofty level to a hasty word, an impatient gesture, or a selfish act, in sickness or in health, in sunshine or in storm, by day or by night, could prove that the age of chivalry has not passed away for ever, then Charles Kingsley fulfilled the ideal of a 'most true and perfect knight' to the one woman blessed with that love in time and to eternity. To eternity—for such love is eternal; and he is not dead. He himself, the man, lover, husband, father, friend, he still lives in God, who is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

The simple slab in the quiet church-yard at Eversley confesses in death the secret of his strength in life,

AMAVIMUS, AMAMUS, AMABIMUS:

the human earthly love mediating that Divine Power which word-signed around the cross points up to his highest source of strength—"GOD IS LOVE."

At the close of this beautiful tribute to a royal man, some hand one day may place that other pen-sketch the stately Jeremy Taylor has left of the queenly wife, the fitting antiphon to this song of wedded love:

"A good wife is heaven's last, best gift to man, his angel and minister of graces innumerable, his gem of many virtues; her voice his sweetest music, her smiles his brightest day, her kiss the guardian of his innocence, her arms the pale of his safety, the balm of his health, the sure balsam of his life; her industry his surest wealth, her economy his safest steward, her lips his faithful counsellor, her bosom the softest pillow of his cares, and her prayers the ablest advocate of heaven's blessing on his head."

O, ye queens, this, your true royalty, is no mockery, these the crowns which press downward as from heavenly-imposing hands are no phantasms. Better, greater, more enduring than any semblance of queenly power over men, such as often allures you, is this reality of love's omnipotence, wherein it is yours to turn all the forces of manhood upward and heavenward, mastering selfish evil into unselfish nobleness, inspiring aspiration, ruling the will, guiding the action, and as veritable spirits of wisdom and strength breathing within men the life of God. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." How he shall think in his heart, what selfish, low and evil dreams his love shall raise within the shadowy halls of the soul, what visions of pure, true, noble life your presence, hallowed in the heart, shall lift before the worshipful love—this it is yours to order, to order by the unconscious influence of your very selves, the silent demand soul makes upon soul.

What are you? What thoughts fill your mind? What ambition stirs your heart? What breath of life exhales from your soul?

Are you strengthening yourself, my young friend, for the throne that awaits you? You will have need of all the force of high-fed mind and rich-stored soul you can bring to your heart-sovereignty. Culture yourselves, I pray you. Live on the great thoughts which expand the soul and charge the being with forcefulness, and eschew utterly the wretched stuff out of which so many girls are building up flabby-tissued brains. Enrich your nature with true art. Busy the days before your coronation with some better preparation for your future position than the frivolous play of society, which wastes the energies and belittles the stature of womanhood. Above all, see that you live in open-souled up-look to the Father, the Source and Fount of all high life, in fellowship with the Son, the pattern and exemplar of all nobleness in human form, in the communion of that Spirit of Holiness who ever moveth in you in all pure, true impulses, the Lord and Giver of Life.

To the soul of the woman he loves, the soul of each man cries:

> "I have a prayer to make.
> Lady, for God's sake, be as beautiful
> As the white form that dwelleth in my heart;
> Yet better still as that Ideal Pure
> That waketh in thee when thou prayest God,
> Or helpest thy poor neighbor. For myself
> I pray . . . .
> Justify my faith
> In womanhood's white-handed nobleness,
> And thee, its revelation unto me.

But I bethink me. If thou turn thy thoughts
Upon thyself, even for that great sake
Of purity and conscious whiteness' self
Thou wilt but half succeed. The other half
Is to forget the first, and all thyself,
Quenching thy moonlight in the blaze of day,
Turning thy full being unto thy God.
Be thou in Him a pure, twice holy child,
Doing the right with sweet unconsciousness,
Having God in thee, thy completed soul."

A Hidden Life.

IV.

THE MOTHER.

THE MOTHER.

"The Mother of Jesus."—JOHN ii. 3.

WHEN the American first turns his face towards Europe a few prominent objects rise above the thousand wonders of the old world, drawing him longingly across the great sea, high among which is the guarded treasure of a little room in a city of Saxony. And as he wanders delightedly among the beauties of nature and art, of which he has dreamed since childhood, his eye never loses sight of that city, and his movements are pivoted on the necessity of seeing the gem of its famous gallery. So, at length, he makes his way through long vistas of paintings, arrested here and there by notable names and classic works, till he passes a narrow doorway and stands in a small compartment before the object of his search. Alone in the room, nothing else present to distract attention, stands the large canvas, familiar as an old friend by innumerable copies. The heart of Christendom, through three centuries, has felt itself strangely stirred before this painting. Its faith, its hope, its love, are

shrined there. A simply clad woman, young, beautiful, noble, holds up in her arms a babe, chubby, winsome, with eyes divinely prescient, looking far out into infinity; while below, in humble adoration, kneel robed pope and prayerful saint, and cherub angels over dimpled arms gaze up in happy wonder to the Holy Mother with the Divine Child.

The ideal motherhood lifts for the world's adoration the perfect child through whom the new heavens are opening above the new earth. Eighteen centuries' retrospect of thankful, worshipful love, are in the hushed look we raise to that sacred symbol. Our religion's faith reaches back to root in the story signed therein, as we worship Him who was 'born of the Virgin Mary.' Our religion's onward-looking hope springs joyously therefrom, as we see there a vision of that which is coming upon the Earth; when out of that historic motherhood in the Nazarite home, rooting through it in God, fed by its forces and patterned after its example, there shall issue upon the race, far on in the future, the ideal motherliness in actual women, and the divine humanity born therefrom in common men. The canvas glows not only with the sacred reflection of that which has been once *for* all, but, with the blessed prophecy of that which is to be *in* all—the Christ-child held in the arms, not alone of Jewish mother, but of Human Motherhood the wide world over, when every house shall be a Holy Family. The pilgrims from afar have the same story to tell as they of old, how 'when they were

come into the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother,' the blessed among women, living once that she might give the holy child to the world, receiving now the honor of all who through her Son have become partakers of the divine nature, and saying silently to her sisters everywhere—Womanhood's highest vocation is to realize the holy motherhood which shall bequeath to earth the heavenly child, the Son of man who can rise to be the Son of God; womanhood's deepest homage is from those who, feeling the power of the great man in thought and action, as a salvation out of error and death, shall turn back to see the young child with his mother, and lay before her who fashioned the earth-Saviour the thankful reverence of the saved; womanhood's truest fame, the fit crown of the self-immersing love which liveth in another's being, is to be known as still is she who through the ages has been to the millions blessed through her, "the mother of Jesus."

The mother with the child is a world-old symbol of human hope, far ante-dating Christianity—as of necessity in a truth essentially Christian, *i. e.*, sucked up out of humanity's deepest rootings and brought to perfect bloom in Jesus of Nazareth—and in rude shapes you will find among ancient Eastern ruins the same form that was perfectly visioned by Raphael in the Madonna di San Sisto. All vital races and ages have recognized the truth that the happiest, holiest vocation for womanhood's powers lies in realizing a true and noble motherhood.

The most common of all missions woman finds is motherhood. Because it is so common, it is lightly esteemed. Its daily round of trivial tasks, occupying the time and absorbing the energies, fret and weary women, and shut them in from the larger life of the world, which courses freshly past the home within which they are imprisoned. It seems a common role to be doing that which nine-tenths of women are doing, and many a heart which once dreamed of great things sighs sadly in the thought of the nursery bondage, and looks out wistfully on the noble labors awaiting mind and heart in the outer world.

The old heresy that the common is the undivine, that the work of God is in the exceptional forces of nature and history, rather than in the unnoticed operations of the lowly, quiet agents, shows itself in very orthodox folk. Whereas, here as everywhere, the ordinary is the important, the substratum of common work that which presses most closely home upon God—the Power working in the daily routine of creation.

To few women is it given to write an "Aurora Leigh," or a "Daniel Deronda," for a few such works will suffice for those who really read them. To most women is it given to hold in the arms a little life, with the pride of the mother, to hear, if having ears to hear they will hearken, the still small voice which whispers the charge in thrilling vibrations, as of the breath of the Lord and Giver of Life sweeping through the cords of being—"Take this child

and nurse it *for me*, and I will give thee thy wages." Receive this child in whom thou delightest, with fond instinct of maternity, as My charge to thee, O daughter, my life in thine; feed its whole being with all fulness and richness of life; nurture it so that mind and heart and soul, as well as body, may develop beautifully towards the perfect manhood of Christ, in which thou shalt return it unto Me full-grown; and I will pay thee thy wages, heart-coin, full measure and overflowing of the joy of those who see of the travail of their souls, and are satisfied in the sons brought forth to God, saying with radiant smile—These are my jewels.

I speak to-night to some mothers, who, on the dull level of the actual round of motherly occupations, lose sight of their high idéal; and, unsustained by a vision of the dignity and blessedness of the responsibility laid upon them, fret under its burdens of care, throw off from them in every way possible their divinely imposed charge, escape from the home to society, to find for themselves pleasure, or to make for themselves work other than that providentially ordered; and thus miss the sweetest delight, and the noblest usefulness the heart of womanhood can know — to recall them to their forsaken duty, their neglected privilege. To some I speak, who in quiet faithfulness and lowly cheerfulness are nurturing God's children for Him, that I may somewhat freshen in their souls that sense of a high vocation out of which springs the strength and sweetness which build their lives into nobleness,

and crown them with gladsomeness. Others there are here, standing in the outer courts of that temple of the heart which lead into the sanctuary where the mother holds up to God the child, to whom in fore-visioning of life's probable calling, let my words come, modestly reverent, as from the priest of the Lord, lifting the veil from the future, and disclosing that which should sober, solemnize, and consecrate their lives.

The aim of all social institutions, of all personal vocations, is the production of a true manhood and womanhood, a larger, richer humanity, men and women grown to the stature of nobly human lives, and charged with the Spirit of God; and the fundamental function for this in the social economy, the most important calling in individual womanly lives, is—Motherhood.

Wealth is—life; vital powers fully developed, beautifully cultured, nobly applied; upon earth, men and women, strong and wise and good, and in the heavens, such other beings as there may rejoicingly move in fulness of perfected energies. The whole social mechanism, with its complicated interactions, labors for this end. For this the forces of the divine life drive the marvellous enginery of civilization. All the actions of society, in concentric circles, revolve around one central movement; the State rising round the church, the church ensphering the Family, the Family only the encasement within which womanhood moves about the babe, in the routine of that daily

influence wherein it mothers the child unto God. Motherhood is the prime fashioner of humanity, the first in order of time, the first in degree of importance. The mysterious duality of sex runs through all creation, the ubiquitous expression of the fundamental distinction in the factors which, in varying interaction, equate the resultant, life—force and form; the communication of energy, and the fashioning of material; fathering and mothering. The scientific statement of growth, is the 'interaction of organism and environment;' the vital principle or force bodied in the germ-cell acting on the nutritive environment of flesh or earth or air or sea, and acted upon by it; the distinction which runs up the organic ascent of life, till the soul quickened of God, the Father of the Spirit, is nourished and fashioned within our dear Mother, the Church, Holy Humanity.

Motherhood is the matrix or mould of nutritive environment, within which life grows, out of whose materials its sustenance is drawn and assimilated into a new being, by which its form is fashioned, body framing body, mind shaping mind, soul reproducing soul; not a physical relation merely, but a psychical relation, a mothering of spirit into its form; primarily the clothing of life with its fleshly organization, the building of a body, but also the clothing of the inner life with its organization, the weaving of a soul-habit, character. It is in this sense I suppose that Swedenborg ascribes the child's body to the mother.

Motherhood thus lies back of all that we ordinarily

call the formative processes of life, a fashioning of mind and heart more important than that of schools and churches. It is the blocking out of the form of the future man or woman, which is then handed over to the painstaking labor of teachers, who can only follow the lines already marked out in the nature, and bring forth in rigid permanence of glorious beauty or deformed ugliness, the image the mother had stamped upon the organization.

Education is only the drawing forth of that already in the child potentially, the liberation of the form of being wrought into its structure. If there be no education, that form of saint or sage or hero may lie sleeping in the clay. If it be wrought by bungling hands, the noble shape may be marred or ruined. There is no exaggeration in the emphasis we lay upon this educing process. But no educing will draw more out of a child than was potentially in him. What of mental power or heart riches, of subtle skill of hand or exquisite sight of imagination, of noble aspiration or pure-souled goodness was already stored in him by the mothering he has received, that, and that only, you will bring out upon him. He may have been mothered only into partial being; full physical life having nourished a sound body, while poor mental life has failed to clothe mind with a worthy organization of powers and faculties, and low soul life has habited the spirit with attenuated virtuousness and ugliness of moral malformation. This imperfectly fulfilled motherhood may be supplemented

by the after-process many a home exhibits. Around the physical life of the babe some other nurturing spirit may spread its environing influence, ensphering it within a wise love which mothers a sweetly growing character—hers in the travail of soul that brings forth a soul to God. Then the period of spiritual gestation reaches out through infancy, and the first, fresh years of babyhood are to be counted in the process of maternity. In the true maternity, body mothers body, mind mothers mind, soul mothers soul; the ensphering life feeding every element of the being it nurtures, charging it with all the qualities, and fashioning it into the full form of the larger nature. This *in*duction is far more important than any *ed*ucation, this *in*volution a prior process determining the subsequent *ev*olution.

Motherhood thus lies far back of that laborious work of character-shaping which follows youth, and which, in toilsome and weary effort at making over again that which was wrongly made up in the start, we rightly call re-forming—the work which so largely occupies the church's attention. A needed work truly, my friends, in this world of neglected motherhood, but only the vain trying to do over again that which ought to have been done, and could only thoroughly have been done, by the first forming of motherhood. Mr. Browning calls the next world the place where God makes over souls? Well is it for the most of us that, wrongly or imperfectly made up here, we may hope ever to be re-formed, reconstructed, taken to

pieces, if need be in bitter pains, and made up rightly. This is the half-glorious, half-sad mystery of the divine working we call redemption. We *must* be born again!—alas! that is true *of* us, as we find ourselves here. We *may* be born again! thank God! that is true *for* us, here or hereafter. But we ought to be so born, so nurtured into being, that *re*generation should no longer be a necessity, for the 'holy thing' nurtured beneath the divine overshadowings within the true mother; that we each should be natural growths of holy character, orderly developments of the Son of man into the Son of God. This is the ideal presented to humanity in that beautiful symbol —the holy mother with the divine child; an ideal which may in measure be true of actual mothers, through the life in them of the same Spirit of God which overshadowed the Nazarite maiden.

It seems, at first thought, a fantastic notion of the Shakers that the second incarnation of Christ was to be in a woman. Below the gross error of the letter is there no truth of the spirit? The second incarnation is the fashioning of 'man writ large' into the spirit form of Jesus, the coming forth upon the race of the face once seen in Galilee, the birth in humanity of 'the Christ that is to be.' Not in *a* woman, but in Woman will this coming Christ appear; a holy motherhood forming the Man who is yet to walk in glorious power of reason, conscience, and will upon the earth. A veritable re-incarnation of Christ this holy womanliness will prove; a self-impartation, a

giving of life for life, a Christly self-abnegation which calls the young mother away from the pleasures of the world, aside from every proud rôle, and devotes her to another's life; an ensphering of the child within mind and heart, to draw from her high thought and rich affection, the forces of its future being; she herself content to be known as was "the mother of Jesus." Let us see how this is true in each of the three phases of motherhood.

I.

The physical motherhood carries in it somewhat of the higher soul mothering, is an initial character-formation. How wonderful, how sacred, if we looked rightly at it, is the mystery of the babe's development, as in the most literal sense it draws the very life of the mother into itself, and grows upon that life. We may well stoop over that most beautiful sight, the young mother with her first-born babe in her arms, reverent towards the unutterable fondness, the tender yearning with which she looks down into the chubby face sleeping upon her bosom. That sweetly dimpled flesh is part of her being. her own life has passed into it, she lives again in it, it is another self. More truly than she dreams she is in that sleeping child; all that constitutes her own being reproduced therein; the fleshly organism having gathered into its subtly woven tissues every force which moved through her life. Even into the making of the body, which lies

so picture-like within her arms, the whole being of the mother has entered. The human body is the vital organ of mind, through which thought, affection, conscience, will, pulse their myriad life-throbs. To and fro along the electric, nervous system, flash the communications between the human spirit and the outer world. The blood that tides these arteries is instinct with intelligence and emotion, so that every pulse moves to the rhythm of my soul. Every slightest feeling that passes through this body, prints its impress on the plastic flesh; every low, vile impulse that stirs the heated blood, deposits its sediment in the veins; every pure, ardent aspiration that breathes out the soul to larger life, thrills through all the fibres a finer, subtler quality. This body is the outer envelope of the spirit, deadened by the dull, feeble soul into a coarse clod of clay, vitalized by the forceful soul into the refined and sublimated spiritual flesh in which the redeemed tread lightly the heavenly ways. If men say, not amiss, that into the strings of the old cremona has passed the life of the master, so that it is an imprisoned soul, what shall we say of this harp of a thousand strings?

Place within yonder huge box a something charged with capacity to vibrate with every pulsing breath of sound, and to record indelibly those impressions and re-emit them in after years, and with what awed wonder we should listen to the music of the evening! What if this thing were a living entity, a being to come forth and walk among men, breathing the harsh dis-

cords or the sweet accords of this night's playing; a soul to jangle endlessly in false action, or to make that sweetest music of a life attuned to duty, melodic with goodness, harmonic in rounded relations of well ordered being? And what if you were called to take your place at yonder key-board, and by such music as is in you fill that future being with discord or with sweetness? That is only the wonder of motherhood, "miss'd in the commonplace of miracle." In the mystery of this life within life, all that is in the mother vibrates through the child, the thoughts that walk her mind imprint their footsteps upon its plastic nature, the emotions that visit her heart with holy aspiration or frivolous desire write their indelible record in its flesh; and those thoughts will awaken, those emotions stir again in the blood of the future man, indurated into character.

A bit of tiny flesh put beneath the lenses of our later microscopes, discloses in each germ-cell, specks, which show themselves in motion; which, watched closely, are seen to be moving back and forth within the minute mass of the cell, casting behind them subtle, filmy threads, running backward and forward along certain lines, spinning ever, but weaving also these threads into curious combinations; living spinners, weavers instinct with intelligence, working with purposed aim towards a definite form; the bobbins of this mystic organism plying to and fro the shuttle of life, beneath the hand of One who sitteth at the loom evolving His high thought.

These mystic bioplasts, spinning their subtle, filmy threads, weaving your body and mine, reach up into every recess of the mothering life, and from every fibre of her being draw forth strands of thought and feeling, that, building us up into form, bring forth upon us the life from which we spring.

Go up the Connecticut valley, and see the slab of stone, once soft slime of some seashore in the far back ages, and note how the patterings of the rain-storm in that ancient ooze dot still the hard rock, and the lines of the wind which blew so long ago, still furrow in wavy ridges its stiffened surface ; and wonder at the imperishableness of nature's records. But wonder also, my friends, at that which your eyes might see daily, though they note it not—in every face that meets your gaze the imprint, in the lines of character, of the feelings and thoughts, the aspirations and passions which once stirred in forgotten parentage.

"I read a record deeper than the skin.
What! shall the trick of nostrils and of lips
Descend through generations, and the soul
That moves within our frame, like God in worlds—
Convulsing, urging, melting, withering—
Imprint no record, leave no documents
Of her great history? Shall men bequeath
The fancies of their palates to their sons,
And shall the shudder of restraining awe,
The slow wept tears of contrite memory,
Faith's prayerful labor, and the food divine
Of fasts ecstatic—shall these pass away
Like wind upon the waters, tracklessly?"

—*Spanish Gypsy*, Book I

II.

There is another stage of motherhood, in which, directly and immediately, soul mothers soul. As you look at the young mother, holding her baby in her arms, and rocking it to sleep in caressing embrace, it takes no very great power of observation to detect the fact that the babe finds more comfort there than elsewhere. Look at the beautiful scene with the inner and finer vision of the soul, and you will see that a second mothering is going on; that within those loving arms, overshadowed by that great and holy love, subtle influences are stealing in from soul to soul, and mind and heart are coming to the birth. When first the motherly arms clasp the tiny babe, they hold only a little animal life, differing from that of the kitten purring upon the hearth-rug chiefly in its possibilities. Mind is not yet alive, affections are undeveloped, soul is unborn.

The old law holds still, life for life, life into life; and mind must yearn over mind and heart labor with heart. Unconsciously, perhaps, this is the process of soul-mothering which is going on through the nursery period. Under the over-brooding of mind, mind wakens. The little eyes look up into the face that bends over it, and beneath its light the first faint signs of intelligence dawn; the feeble smile scarce drawing the lips, the cooing talk which, in the untranslatable tongue of the nursery, communicates be

tween mother and child the earliest tidings of thought and feeling. The little eyes look up and read far more than they can decipher, and the babe lies under the over-arching love which broods above it, dimly conscious of a sweet, warm, vivifying influence that steals in upon it, fertilizing the heart. Thus heart wakens, and love, the life of the spirit, the inner vitality of all noble being, opens, and the soul is born. The inner charm of the winning home scene—the infant lying in the mother's arms, smiling back the light of love which streams upon it from above—is, that it is a symbol of spirit birth. For even thus is it that within the everlasting arms, overshadowed by the presence of divine love, knowing little of the mystery of the presence we feel, our love for the goodness which is God, wakens, and we are born from above.

All life of intellect and character, all high thought and noble aspiration, come out in us under some mothering. It may be first, as it should be, that of the natural mother. It may be, in lack of this, later on in childhood, that of some providentially supplied spirit-mother; some over-brooding, sympathetic, larger life of relative or friend. But soul-mothering of some sort, from some one, each of us has had who lives in higher life than that of the body. The whole relation of the nursery, where rightly realized, is the carrying on of this process. Through these early years the plastic character is receiving its impress, is being formed and fashioned.

By direct instruction, by habits enforced and worked

into the tissue of the inner being, by the atmosphere diffused around the child and the spirit inbreathed upon it through every word and tone, a soul is being moulded into being. Some things are, of course, more important than others in this process, but nothing is unimportant. Every day tells, every hour leaves its impress.

(*a.*) Character is far more an unconscious inspiration than a purposed manufacture. As Emerson tells us, it is the things of which we take little note that count most in our education. The atmosphere in which we live and move and have our being in the formative period, is the all-important element of character. Our American fathers are little with their children. The mother is, or ought to be, with them all the time possible, until, in passing out from under her monopolizing influence to the influences of child society and school, nature declares that the work of others is now in order. She must create the home atmosphere, must key its tone. Her sunny light, her loving warmth, her gentle diffusive sympathy, her calm and even patience, oxygenate the air in which the young soul draws its early breath, and the little life drinks in the elements of force and sweetness. Bring a child up in this high air of an Alpine soul, and it may come down, if need be, in after years to low, miasmatic atmosphere, robust of conscience, vigorous of will, pure of soul, to live amid depressing influences in unharmed health and strength.

(*b.*) Goodness is not first perceived as an abstraction,

a generalization; it is in the beginning wholly concrete and personal. We do not learn to believe in good men and women on the authority of our innate ideas of goodness, but we learn to trust these innate ideas of goodness because we have seen and known good men and women. It is a law of all life that the general issues from the aggregation of particulars, that the abstract is reached by induction from the concrete.

If we could analyze our notions of virtue, the forms of goodness which rise before our mind, we should find them always the shadows cast by some lives under whose presence we have been in plastic hours. Books will not tell you what virtue is, despite their labored definitions, which after all only construct the ethical skeleton, and have no power to clothe it in palpitating charm of living reality. Laws will not teach you truth or honesty, with all their toilsome elaboration of ethical distinction, as will the soul of one man, instinct with honor, habitually enveloping you in his influence.

Humanity concentrates itself above the child into the mother. A true mother, overshadowing a young life in its most plastic period with the living presence of a pure and noble woman-soul, clothed in gracious charm of her all-loving sympathy, is the first revelation of goodness. Every form of virtue will seem in after years the shadow of her spirit, in the various phases through which she moved around the child soul.

(*c.*) This revelation of goodness has a subtle power of conviction wholly unfollowable by the sleuth-hounds of reason. Logic may not track the footsteps of some noble life back unto the Eternal source of goodness, from which it has issued and into which it returns, leaving a trail of light behind it, as a pathway unto God; but the keen sense of the soul runs on ahead of the halting steps of syllogisms, and, in unerring instinct, reaches up to absolute certainty of the reality of the goodness whose dewy sweetness is on the ground where passed the saint of God. You may reason about the nature and authority of the ethical ideas, the moral sentiments, and at times doubt's palsy may creep up over your soul, and you may half believe these divinely beautiful ideals which form in your mind to be the phantasms of a dream, empty unrealities rising from the alembic of the physical organism, under the mysterious spell of the arch-magician Nature; but if in the depths of your soul there are the forms of men and women you have known, of souls whose goodness has once overshadowed you in daily life, or but the form of one who has incarnated before you these visions of the better life, you believe, instinctively and unhesitatingly, in the reality of the virtue which has thus revealed itself in the virtuous. To body this revelation of human goodness, unto which in distant years the sore-strained soul may look back in re-assurance of its tempted faith, is the high and holy mission of her who bends over the first years of the tender nature, imprinting

the proof-impressions of character, making evermore,

> "All goodness credible
> Because of the great trust her goodness bred."

(*d.*) This revelation of goodness is one with its inspiration. To talk about goodness is not necessarily to kindle any desire for it. But for a pure, good soul to move habitually before a sensitive life, casting the shadow of its goodness upon the receptive nature, wafting upon its opening senses the influences of a spiritual presence, shining in upon the first perceptions the face of gracious goodness, in the person of one around whom the earliest and most sacred affections gather—is to instil, with these deepest impressions, the love of all that has thus forever hallowed itself in the revered name of Mother. That which is before us we unconsciously imitate. That which presents itself to us attractively, moulds us. Were it only that the mother is so constantly before the child, in the plastic period, it would grow like her; but when the first outflow of love envelopes that presence with so peculiar a charm, and makes that form sacredly dear, her influence becomes wellnigh omnipotent. When everything is shut out from the field of the glass, and one face alone occupies it, and within the box is the sensitive plate, is it any wonder that this face stamps itself upon the negative, and repeats itself indelibly?

(*e.*) Thus, also, through the personalities of the good,

the roots of character grow upward into God, the believed-in source of all human goodness. We rise from the good man to the good God. The form of God is the light-shadow outlined by the life of some holy man or woman. Around the pure, good soul, there shapes itself a larger form of purity and goodness; back of and above the actual holiness, there rises the ideal holiness. We feel God through the God-like. The revelation of God was of old through holy men; the full manifestation of His personality came in the man Christ Jesus. Each relation in which a good soul blesses us, becomes a medium through which breaks upon us the sense of the life which is smiling on us in all human mediations of helpfulness.

The first of all relations becomes the earliest of all revelations of the kind power above, and the thought of God has ever fallen upon the world, shadowed in the loving ministrations of those earthly providences through whom men everywhere have learned to look up and say, "Our Father who art in heaven." She who is ever with us in the days when the soul is wakening, first forms our thought of that higher presence of watchful, gracious, tender care, we instinctively feel and see in the shape of the one through whom that larger light of life steals in upon us. The wondering awe of the little one in quiet evening hours, when, with holy reverence, the mother, bending over her child, speaks of One above, and folds its hands in hushed prayer to the good God, forms evermore that

presence, as of a greater mother-love; and in years long after the soul sings—

> "Thy grandeur is all tenderness,
> All mother-like and meek;
> The hearts that will not come to it,
> Humbling itself to seek."

Thus you will perceive the significance of the fact that the greatly good men of the world have nearly always had greatly good mothers. By the mother, more than by any one other power, the character is fashioned for good or for evil. Well said the old Spanish proverb, "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy." The first three years are the determining years for character. They are the mother's years. What are you doing with them, young mothers?

One of the saddest of our modern improvements is the doing away with the old-fashioned motherhood. Our young mothers seem in haste to be rid of the noblest, holiest mission earth offers. A mother will secure from the nearest intelligence office a girl, who undertakes to relieve her of the charge of her little one, and will hand over to this mere hireling, this ignorant stranger, the soul-mothering which God has entrusted to her. She has mothered the body—anyone will do to mother the soul. So the little one is left in the hands of this hireling, placed under her constant influence, subjected to the subtle impress of her spirit, to draw into its inner being, the life, be it what

it may, of this uncultured soul. She wakens its first thoughts, rouses its earliest emotions, brings the delicate action of motivities to bear upon the will—generally in such hands a compound force of bullying and bribing, mean fear and mean desire — tends it, plays with it, lives with it; and thus the young mother is free to dress and drive, to visit and receive, to enjoy balls and operas, discharging her trust for an immortal life by proxy! Is there any malfeasance of office, in these days of dishonor, like unto this? Our women crowd the churches to draw the inspiration of religion for their daily duties, and then prove recreant to the first of all fidelities, the most solemn of all responsibilities. We hear fashionable young mothers boast that they are not tied down to their nurseries, but are free to keep in the old, gay life; as though there was no shame to the soul of womanhood therein. Well, my friends, you have the ideal of such fashionable unmotherliness, drawn by a master hand; the gay bird of pleasure, feeling the presence of the little chit in the home-nest only as an annoyance and a burden, and so dismissing it wholly from her mind, and pursuing her round of follies unhaunted by the face of the heart-hungry boy, who wonders, in his joyless nursery, why his mamma does not stay sometimes with him, pining in a vague want, the craving for the rich soft warmth of a soul-mothering; but do you quite fancy as your ideal, Becky Sharp? Little Amelia was by no means so brilliant a lady, devoting her life absolutely to the bringing up of her little boy, shutting herself

in from all outside attractions, to live in and with and for her child; but was she not, on the whole, a rather more womanly figure?

The age is calling back recreant motherhood to its holy charge. The kindergarten, of which you hear so much lately, is simply an effort to restore to its true dignity and attractiveness this soul-mothering. It is the child-garden, a system for turning the play of infancy, its natural and spontaneous activity of sport, into a nurture of body, mind, heart, and soul. Going back of the age when education usually begins, it seeks to rescue for character-formation the important years between three and seven; placing the little ones under the presence of a wise and loving woman, who knows how to order their playful activity into a culture of mental powers and moral habits. But in its present stage it is only a half-developed system. In the plan of its founder, Froebel, it looks to the development of a real soul-mothering in the nursery; as young mothers shall by degrees be led to realize the all-importance of the period which is under their sole control, and shall grow willing to train for this highest of all tasks, as they would have to do for positions not half so important or so difficult; and shall thus carry into the nursery, for home application in the first dawnings of intelligence, the principles and methods of this beautiful nature-system. The watchword of the kindergarten is the cry of its master to motherhood everywhere—"Come, let us live with our children;" studying their natures, delighting in their companionship.

entering thus into full sympathy with them and gaining full sway over them, content and happy to devote all the powers of womanhood to this soul-mothering.

This is the want of the age, mothers intelligently, sympathetically living with their children, making thus the earliest environment such as shall mould noble souls. Oh, why will women throw away a power so unique, a delight so fresh and sweet? To train an animal a man will spend months, and find reward in the pleasure of the work. A woman will tend flowers patiently and lovingly in happy contentedness. Is it a lesser joy to see a child-soul unfold in beauty; to train a character to take shape and hue in noble form and rich expression? Women sigh—"Oh, that I could write a great book, or carve a beautiful statue, or compose a symphony in which I should live upon the earth!" You may write a living poem, may carve a vital form of beauty, may chord the full powers of a life to orchestral harmony, may make a soul in which you shall live and be known to all who receive the blessing of your work as was she who mothered the Perfect Man, Mary, "the mother of Jesus." "All that I am," said John Quincy Adams, "my mother made me."

I tracked this summer the most famous river of Europe to one of its sources. Along the rushing, roaring torrent men had been busy, with utmost labor and finest skill, directing the pathway of the mighty force which carried life and death within its bosom; bank-

ing its shores, walling in with massive masonry its foaming fall down the steep mountain side. Far up among the eternal snows, whence issued its career, a woman's hand could have turned it to the right or the left and shaped the fate of a continent. I understood thus the meaning of the ancient word—"The king of Babylon stood at the *mother of the ways.*"

III.

Out of this faithful mothering in early days there rises that fullest motherhood, in which the moral life of the woman reverently loved, hallowed by the most tender associations, enspheres, as an all-encompassing environment of holy impulse and pure influence, the life of the growing youth, shapes the forming character, feeds it with rich forces of goodness, guards it from the worst dangers; the mother's spirit travailing with the spirit of the man, till she bring forth her Son unto God, and rejoicingly looks up into the face of the Father of our spirits saying—Behold, here am I and the child whom Thou hast given me.

A true mother makes her form an image of all that is "pure womanly," which follows the footsteps of the man going forth into the evil world, keeping alive his faith in purity, his desire for goodness; her reproachful eyes looking down into his heart's secrets, shaming every wrong; her unseen hand resting upon him in every hour of trial, strengthening him for

duty; the heaven which "lies about us in our infancy," fading not wholly away behind him, its shadows reaching out after her, till the dawn of a new life glimmers, and the heaven before the man who overcometh opens, bright and blessed; and rounding earth's experiences he finds the old garden of the Lord, where, as he bows hushed in the Holy Presence beneath the tree of life, he sees the imprint of his childish knees where, mother taught, he learned to believe, to love, to pray. The man in looking back upon the true mother should be able to say, there was

> "One
> Not learned, save in gracious household ways;
> Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants;
> No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
> In angel instincts, breathing Paradise—
> Interpreter between the Gods and men,
> Who looked all native to her place, and yet
> On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
> Too gross to tread; and all male minds perforce
> Sway'd to her from their orbits as they turned,
> And girdled her with music. Happy he
> With such a mother! faith in womankind
> Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
> Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
> He shall not blind his soul with clay."
> —*The Princess*, Part vi.

Such a woman interprets the word of the rabbi who, perceiving the footsteps of his mother, rose up and said, "The majesty of the Eternal cometh near." Blessed he who carries with him as a talisman under

the power of passion, the glare of gold, the soft, sweet siren song of pleasure, a true mother's love. No earthly panoply is like that ensphering presence; no guardian angel so ubiquitous, so watchful as this mother-spirit. Our master gathered his pupils round him one day, and with emphatic word and tone said to us, "Boys never allow in your minds a thought you would not have your mothers read;" and over some of us that word called into being the guardianship of motherly purity, the encompassing presence of a love before which unclean thoughts fled our souls. John Randolph is reported to have said, "I used to be called a Frenchman, because I took the French side in politics. But though this is false, I should have been a French atheist had it not been for one recollection, and that was the memory of the time when my departed mother used to take my little hands in hers, and causing me to bow at her knee, taught me to pray, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'"

A distinguished public man of Indiana, lately deceased, was engaged at the time of his sudden death, in writing reminiscences of his life. He was narrating to his daughter, who was writing from his dictation, the story of a terrible temptation which assailed him when quite a youth. By attention to business and correct deportment he had won the implicit confidence of all who knew him. This confidence was shown, when on one occasion—before the days of easy and rapid communication by means of railroad and telegraph—he was entrusted with $22,000 to deliver

in the then far distant Cincinnati. Day after day, on his long horseback journey, he guarded his treasure with the most scrupulous fidelity, without a thought of dishonesty. But he said—

"There was a moment, a supreme and critical one, when the voice of the tempter penetrated my ear. It was the old tempter that sung in the ear of Eve. It was when I reached the crown of those imperial hills that overlook the Ohio river, when approaching Lawrenceburg from the interior. The noble stream was the great artery of commerce at that day, before a railroad west of Massachusetts had been built. What a gay spectacle it presented, flashing in the bright sunlight, covered with flatboats, with rafts, with gay painted steamers, ascending and descending, and transporting their passengers in brief time to the Gulf of Mexico, the gateway to all parts of the world. I had but to sell my horse and go aboard one of these with my treasure, and I was absolutely beyond the reach of pursuit. There were no telegraphs then, flashing intelligence by an agency more subtle than steam, and far outrunning it; no extradition treaties requiring foreign governments to return the felon. The world was before me, and at the age of twenty-one, with feeble ties connecting me with those left behind, I was in possession of a fortune for those early days. I recall the fact that this thought was a tenant of my mind for a moment, and for a moment only. Bless God, it found no hospitable lodgment any longer. And what think you, gentle reader, were the associate thoughts that came to my rescue? Away over rivers and mountains, a thousand miles distant, in an humble farm-house, on a bench, an aged mother reading to her boy from the oracles of God."

At this point his voice suddenly choked, his emotions overcame him, he said to his daughter, "We

will finish this at another time"—laid his head back on his chair, and died almost instantly and without a groan.

Many a soul has slipped every leash linking it to God, save one, and that one thread, woven from a mother's heart, reaching out through every wider wandering, has held with infinite tenacity under all tension, and at the last has gently drawn the sinner back to Him who is in a mother's love.

One of the most gifted men the church has ever had; philosopher, poet, preacher; ruling well and wisely in his lifetime, his bishopric of Hippo, and making his presence felt through all the churches of the empire; ruling imperiously by his writings, the theology of Christendom for over a thousand years, constructing the framework of Catholic dogma, and moulding, through Calvin, the systems of Protestantism; has left us, from his own hand, the story which will long enshrine, as the very symbol of this soul-mothering, the picture of Monica and Augustine. In his confessions, St. Augustine tells us of his youthful follies, the fierce longing of his warm African nature for sensual pleasures, his enticement into forbidden relations, his hungry ambition, his speculative wanderings — and of the secret, subtle hold over him, of that wise, strong mother-love:

"And Thou sentest thine handmaiden from above, and drewest my soul out of that profound darkness; my mother, Thy faithful one, weeping to Thee for me, more than mothers weep the bodily deaths of their children. For she by that faith and

spirit, which she had from Thee, discerned the death wherein I lay, and Thou heardest her, O Lord: Thou heardest her, and despisedst not her tears, when streaming down, they watered the ground under her eyes in every place where she prayed; yea, thou heardest her. For whence was that dream whereby Thou comfortedest her? . . . For she saw herself standing on a certain wooden rule, and a shining youth coming towards her, cheerful, and smiling upon her who was sad, and overwhelmed with grief. But he inquired of her the causes of her grief and daily tears, and she answering that she was bewailing my perdition, he bade her rest contented, and told her to look and observe, 'that where she was, there was I also.' And when she looked, *she saw me standing by her on the same rule,*"

—the rule of life, the law of God.

Wandering far from home and far from truth, his guardian spirit, strong in the assurance of that vision, never faints in her faithful following, crossing the sea, and tracking her unhappy son to Milan.

"My mother had now come to me, resolute through piety, following me over sea and land, in all perils confiding in Thee. . . . I was carried forth, therefore, upon the bier of her thoughts, that Thou mightest say to the son of the widow, Young man, I say unto thee, arise; and he should revive and begin to speak, and Thou shouldest deliver him to his mother."

Strangely startled, as he tells us, from his evil ways, and brought to himself, gently drawn from his mazy errors of speculation, and led to see in Jesus Christ the Light of Truth, the Saviour out of sin, the newborn son turns his face homeward, with his happy

mother, seeing of the travail of her soul, and satisfied. Together they have reached the sea-port of Rome, where occurs that incident which the pencil of Ary Scheffer has made familiar to many who know not the more vivid word-picturing of Augustine's own pen: the saintly woman, and the son redeemed from sin, sitting, hand clasped in hand, raptly looking on through the seen glory of the sunset, into a rarer glory as of the world unseen, eternal; the light of the setting day illumining their faces, and the brightness of a day that knows no close, rising over the shadows of oncoming death upon the countenance of the holy mother, transfiguring her with the vision of that heavenly country, where he who was lost, and by her side sat found, who was dead, and through her clasped hand thrilled the sympathetic life of soul, should yet walk with her in white forever; whose translation into words let us now hear.

"The day now approaching whereon she was to depart this life, it came to pass that she and I stood alone, leaning on a certain window which looked into the garden of the house where we now lay at Ostia; where removed from the din of men, we were recruiting from the fatigues of a long journey, for the voyage. We were discoursing then together, alone, very sweetly; and forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we were inquiring between ourselves in the presence of the Truth, which Thou art, of what sort the eternal life of the saints was to be, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man. But yet unsatisfied we gasped with the mouth of the heart after these heavenly

streams of Thy fountain, the fountain of life, which is with Thee; that being bedewed thence according to our capacity we might in some sort mediate upon so high a mystery. And when our discourse was brought to that point that we perceived the very highest delight of the earthly senses, in the very purest material light, was, in respect of the sweetness of that heavenly life, not only not worthy of comparison, but not even of mention, we raising ourselves up with a more glowing affection towards the self-same, did by degrees pass through all things bodily, even the very heaven, whence sun and moon and stars shine upon the earth; yea, we were soaring higher yet, by inward musing and discourse and admiring of Thy works. . . . We were saying to ourselves then: If the tumult of the flesh were hushed, hushed the images of earth and waters and air, hushed also the poles of heaven—yea, the very soul hushed to herself and by not thinking on self surmounting self, hushed all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue and every sign and whatsoever only exists in transition—if they all should be hushed, having only roused our ears to Him who made them, and He alone should then speak, not by them, but by Himself, that we might hear His word, not through any tongue of flesh, nor angel's voice, nor sound of thunder, nor in the dark riddle of a similitude, but might hear Him whom in these things we love, might hear His very Self without these (as we two now strained ourselves to hear and in swift thought touched on that Eternal wisdom which abideth over all);—could this be continued on, and other visions of kind far unlike be withdrawn, and this one should ravish and absorb and wrap up its beholder amid these inward joys, so that life might be forever like that one moment of intuition which now we sighed after; were not this the Enter into my Master's joy? . . .

"In that day when we were speaking of these things, and this world with all its delights became, as we spake, contemptible to us, my mother said, 'Son, for mine own part I have no

farther delight in anything in this life. What I do here any longer, and to what end I am here, I know not, now that my hopes in this world are accomplished. One thing there was for which I desired to linger for awhile in this life, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died. My God hath done this for me more abundantly, in that I now see thee despising earthly happiness, and become his servant. What do I here?' "

Blessed in some such wise will always be her end, the story of whose perfect mothering a grateful son can thus write: "I will not omit whatsoever my soul would bring forth concerning Thy handmaiden—*who brought me forth,* both in the flesh, that I might be born to this temporal light, and *in heart, that I might be born to Light Eternal.*"—*The Confessions of St. Augustine:* Book ix.

IV.

"The mother of Jesus," the form of gracious womanhood hallowed by the most reverent imagination, glorified by art's most tender touches—rises over all other lives, the ideal of motherhood.

The maidenly purity, the sweet unconsciousness, instinct in the lightly touched sketch of the girl of Nazareth, strengthful of will, richly treasured in thought, cultured by familiarity with the noblest of all national literatures, living in personal communion with the Source of all truth and beauty and goodness, rooting her life in the living God, lifting the solemn days of her oncoming motherhood into such high thoughts, such holy emotions, that her soul

effloresced in that exquisite poem, the Magnificat · the motherly consecration which called this gifted woman away from all the outer walks of life, and left her no place in Jewish literature other than that given her by this one blossoming of her genius, devoting all her powers to the nurture of her child; the motherly brooding in mind over her boy, thoughtful upon his words, as she "kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart;" the motherly vigilance of his every way, as she speedily missed him in the journey and then gave herself no rest till she found him; the motherly mastery of the child who returned from the vision of the temple to be subject unto his parents; the motherly reverence, betrayed in so many little ways, for the child given her of God, fulfilling the saying of the old Romans, "We ought to revere the child most highly;" the wise restraint upon her motherly fondness which kept her from boastful talk about her Wonderful child; the rare reticence which handed down to us but one incident of the childhood of the world's greatest soul, disfiguring the pages of his biographers with not a single grotesque story, such as those with which others thought to adorn this marvellous boyhood; the faithful motherly following of her great Son through his life, in beautiful lowliness, in steadfast patience, in heroic fearlessness; the quenchless motherly love which drew her to the Cross on which that Son hung dying, and sustained her there unfaltering amid the hellish horrors of the mob, beneath the apparent wreck and ruin of her hopes in

him, under the sight of his unutterable agony, strong and firm while her presence could yield to his glazing eye in death the sight of one who loved and trusted him, when his chosen disciples forsook him and fled ;—image such a perfect motherhood, that quite naturally the homage of mankind has glorified it into the myth so exquisitely visioned by art, the Assumption into the heavens of the "Mother of Jesus," the apotheosis of motherhood.

V.

THE MODISTE:

WOMAN'S WORK IN SOCIETY AS THE FASHIONER OF MANNERS AND MORALS.

THE MODISTE.

"YE shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you."—LEVIT. xx: 23.

THE historical succession of races is not the play of chance. With many a devious turn and twist, many a doubling upon its course, many a backwater where no movement forward is discernible, and where existence spreads itself out in dull and stagnant inaction, the stream of history treads on toward a larger, freer life of man. There is, upon the whole, an orderly progression through the rise and fall of nations; each wave of the great sea gathering into itself the force of its predecessor, swelling, rolling, sinking, only to yield its momentum to another billowy movement. Rising over Palestine, the huge tidal-wave of Jewish migration swept down upon the semi-civilizations of Canaan, obliterating them from the face of the earth, because the impetus of the movement which had originally borne them to power was exhausted, and the forces of their social and religious life, ebbing out in corrupting manners and morals, sucked back in terrific undertow into the cresting avalanche which thus returned in judg-

ment upon the land. Each world-wave forms to push the sea-throb forward. It must advance upon the line won by its predecessor, or it must yield place to another movement, pressing irresistibly from behind.

This is the tale of all history; the explanation of the fate of the overwhelmed tribes of Canaan; of the deluge of fresh, young races, which, from the forests of Germany and the steppes of Asia, broke over imperial Rome; of the angry swell from the North, which even now crests above the stagnant semi-civilization of Turkey. Sink not back into the corrupting customs of the tribes which preceded you in the land, O Israel; rise above the civilizations upon which you mount; or give way as they have done to a more vital race. "Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you."

The law-giver's eye was resting especially upon the social life of the Canaanitish tribes. In their manners he read their essential character. From their manners he most feared the emasculation of his people's virtue. Against their gross errors of religion and morality he could guard Israel by dogma and law, by rite and rule; out from the characteristic evils of the Canaanites, the sensuality and cruelty which had bodied themselves in lax habits and merciless customs, he could secure his people only by dispossessing their bad manners through the spread of a purer social code. It was not beneath the dignity of the great law-giver to instruct concerning manners, any more than it is below the seriousness of our high-priest of scientific philoso-

phy to write an essay upon manners. In the manners of the rude races of Canaan, Moses recognized a moral potency he could not disregard; in the manners of society to-day, Herbet Spencer reads the secret evils of our nineteenth century life.

Our two English words, manners and morals, reach back to a common rooting in the Latin *mores.* Manners are at once an effect and a cause of character. The inner spirit of a people comes forth in their manners, their grace and gentleness, their purity and dignity, or their coarseness and vulgarity, their impurity and frivolity. Manners are no mere social veneer, no superficial shine. They are the polish the heart of the people takes; not a finish laid on, but a grace brought out. Masters of deportment, Turveydrops, and their plebeian kin, Chesterfields and their aristocratic *confrères,* do not make the manners of a people. They may teach the art of behavior, but their art is conventional, the formulating of the spirit which is in the people into codes of etiquette; which spirit, when that life is full and true, expresses itself naturally. The art of deportment is only a laborious imitation of life. Through all the elegance of the fashionable man, the coarse, mean soul will show its lack of true refinement, while beneath the awkwardness of the rustic clod, the native gentleness of a noble soul will reveal itself in untaught courtesy and grace.

In establishing patterns of action manners create moulds of feeling, and conform the inner shape to the habits worn. So subtle is the relation of mind and

matter that action, the result and expression of some inner state, calls out that mood, defines and develops it and returns it to the soul a larger force of good or evil. It is thus that habit educates thought and feeling. Build your trellis-work, and the vine shall creep in and out among its latticed supports and weave you such shape of beautiful leafage as you will. Cast your mould in the form which pleases you and run a fluent life into it, and its lines will re-appear upon the character. Let me fashion the manners of a nation, and I care not who write its laws.

In studying the manners of a people we naturally look to the class in which there is the greatest opportunity for the cultivation of social relationships, that which we call, distinctively, "society." It is in no haphazard allotment of words that this title has become affixed to what are known as the upper classes. The conditions under which the poor exist are unfavorable to the development of any true social life. The slavish toil which relieves them at nightfall too weary for anything but rest or play, the cramped rooms which prevent free commingling, the scant purses which allow no beautifying of their surroundings, the lack of time and strength and means for that culture of the mind which opens the higher planes of thought and feeling, where we escape from ourselves and merge in common currents of ennobling life—foreclose a real association. A New York tenement house is not nature's provision for society. That is found among those who by the possession of means are lifted above servile toil, freed

in time, and empowered with means to culture themselves, and commingle recreatively under conditions favoring mutual intercourse. It is in "society," therefore, that manners are to be studied, as it is there that the life of a people finds its expression, and in this expression sets the standard after which it patterns its upreaching endeavor.

"Society"—the class relatively leisured and therefore comparatively cultured, unto whose production civilization labors—is the efflorescence of a people's life; the coming out into fulness of fruitioned form of its inner spirit. Into the flower the whole life of the plant condenses itself; life of roots and trunk and stem, of branch and leaf and bud; and the character of the production that goes on among the toilers in the dark ground, of the trade that plies busily along the veins, comes forth in the gay and gorgeous flower.

The fashion of the social flower is expressive of the whole life of a people; its aims and aspirations are revealed there; its ideals live in bodied form. The dress, the adornments, the amusements, the conversation, the deportment of "society," show the culture of the people on whose supporting stem this elegant flower rears itself. We know what Israelitish life in the brilliant era of Uzziah was, from the graphic portraiture of the fashionable manners of Jerusalem Isaiah's pen has drawn; reading therein its superficiality and vapidity, its barbaric display and frivolous vanity, its luxuriousness and voluptuousness. The brilliant court of Louis XIV. revealed the real spirit of France in that

age, its political centralism, its social caste, its intellectual vigor, its æsthetic taste, its religious formalism, its philosophic epicureanism, its splendid sensuality. The developing phases of a nation's life are indicated infallibly by society. The grave and sombre manners of Whitehall in the days of Cromwell, and its buffoonery and gallantry under Charles II., show the change of spirit that had passed over the nation between the Revolution and the Restoration. What Rome was, in the republican and imperial eras, we discern in the simple taste and dignified courtesy and modest purity of the early age, and in the artistic bestiality of the magnificent civilization which ruled the world from the seven hills.

The life that made Venice great and powerful, is still traceable in the traditions of the reverent, dignified and courteous manners of the noble men and virtuous women who graced the city of the sea with a society of almost ideal honor; while the death that crept as the slow tide up her lagoons and within her palaces, shows its oncomings, not so strongly in the decay of her religion, or the decline of her dominion, as in the frivolous and licentious manners of her society, which harlequined beneath the shadow of St. Mark's, and wantoned in the halls of the Rialto.

Our society to-day is the expression of the thoughts and sentiments moving our people, of the ideals before them, of the culture won by them—the mirror in which we see ourselves.

Inasmuch as society is thus the bloom of a people's

life, it is not only a sign thereof, but a force thereon. The flower, in drawing forth the life of the plant, would, were that life self-conscious, hold up above it the fashion of its being, unto which all its toil and effort were straining; and every rootlet, every leaf, and every bud would have that flower before it in its daily labors, as the consummation of its aspiration, the crown of its endeavor. Society, in thus embodying the culture and character of a people, shapes the ideals unto which all the lower life looks up, in desire and effort; sets the standards of taste, ordains the customs of living, forms the style, fashions the manners, and in the manners the morals of the land. Men adjudge worth by the classification society draws, admire that which it approves, think according to its opinions, accept the habits it declares *comme il faut,* lives in the way it calls "the thing," carry themselves in all their relations to their fellows as it deems proper. Whether we mingle much in it or not, we feel its despotism over our whole life. We cannot, in this land of liberty, emancipate ourselves from this irresponsible tyranny. The church tells us what we ought to do as Christians, but society whispers in our ears how far we may follow Christ; sets bounds to our enthusiasm, regulates our philanthropy, and comfortably reassures us as to the extent to which the Master's words exact obedience. What does society say of it?—is the ultimate question concerning every thing. To ensure the success of any novelty, in piety and philanthropy as thoroughly as in dresses and decorations, one thing is needful—make it

fashionable. Society is thus in a very literal sense the fashioner of life.

In this world of society, woman is mistress. Social ife is chiefly within doors, moving round the centre of the home, woman. Man builds and guards the home, and places woman there to order and to beautify it, to open it in hospitality, and diffuse in it the atmosphere of her presence, to sway, as the moon, the tides that flow through it. As she has been so has society ever been. When the virtuous woman of the Jewish idyl, strong, wise, and pure, has moved therein, with the charm of her higher loveliness, the glory of the cultured soul shining through the grace of the beautiful body, society has been a fount of honor, a pattern and exemplar of noble life. When woman has been ignobly unstrengthful, weak of mind or weak of will, undisciplined in thought, frivolous in aim, selfish in heart, sensual in nature, she has been unable to inspire any noble spirit in social life; has left it to gather round the sumptuous table, to chatter its vapidities amid senseless splendors, to become an exhibition of the richness of feminine toilettes, and the length of masculine purses; and, in the absence of the higher power, she has thrown around man the potent spell of passional attraction, to hold him to her sway; and society has proven a cancer in the very heart of the nation, tainting the blood which flowed out through all the members of the body, building up unwholesome life in every portion of the social organism. Therefore have I called woman the Modiste, the "oracle of mode,"

the power ordaining our standards of taste and shaping our models of life, the patterner of our habits, the fashioner of our manners and thus of our morals. Great is Fashion of the Americans, and woman is her priestess.

Mr. Emerson said lately in a lecture—"Our politics threaten England and her manners threaten us." Our American civilization is the latest world-billow, rolling over Europe a mighty tidal-wave which has swept to this Western shore the dissatisfaction and unrest of the old era, mounting still tumultuously towards some new order. We have changed the institutions of the old world, yet we copy servilely its customs, reproducing—as in all mere imitations—the faults and missing the virtues of the model; laboriously realizing an anachronism: the manners of the past without the life which developed them; the ideal of the gentleman and lady fashioned in feudal halls, set up within our brown-stone fronts on the avenue; social caste without any principle of stratification; aristocratic pride without its cultured blood; leisurely life, supported upon a mass of toiling humanity, without the old return of public service in a real landlordship or any sort of law-wardship whatsoever; the social comminglings which knew no other centre in materialistic ages than the heavy board and the deep flagon, in the era of art and music and literature and science; the fashions of the middle ages on the men and women of the nineteenth century. We need therefore to ponder seriously that word of the great

law-giver—" Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you."

I.

Concerning this fashioning of manners and morals, the first question that arises is—Since society is the social commingling of the *élite* of a people, who constitute this *élite* class, and what are the social qualifications admitting one among the fashionables ?

In most countries of the old world this question is practically answered. The social lines are clearly drawn and a hierarchy of rank is definitely ordered. An hereditary aristocracy, carrying in its veins the blood of many generations of acknowledged social leadership, constitutes society. To our democratic notions this seems a false social order, and not without reason. It undoubtedly bars out much that ought to find admittance ; culture and character alike failing to enroll one among the fashionables without 'blood.' It is no longer now, whatever it may once have been, a natural selection of worth, a vital conformation. Social ideals are stereotyped and life becomes conventional. It fashions an order of dulness. Nevertheless there are in this social stratification some very positive advantages, the lack of which we sorely feel. It proscribes mere wealth as rigidly as untitled culture. The *nouveau-richesse* are taught that there is a social distinction money cannot always buy. One feels, in this land, tempted to admire any standard of social rank other than that of our Almighty Dollar.

An hereditary aristocracy finely educated physically, generously educated mentally, and soundly educated morally, surrounded by the conditions which minister to refinement and grace, creates a race of men and women who, whatever their defects, serve as admirable models of taste, fashioners of noble manners. It is no light advantage to have social manners taught by those high-bred English dames, whose presence is a rebuke to vulgarity and loudness, an exemplification to young girls of an ideal of womanliness attainable only by self-discipline, real culture of the whole being. The consciousness of this acknowledged leadership throws upon society the responsibility expressed so beautifully in that motto of the old French family; the utterance of the sensitively honorable pride which, looking back through generations of illustrious ancestry and looking down upon the less favored life below, felt its position a trust for all that is pure and lovely and of good report—*noblesse oblige.*

There have been exceptional communities where society was constituted by a still higher principle of classification, where merit in thought or action gave position and prestige, creating an aristocracy of worth, to mingle in which was truly a liberal education. In these favored cities the ideals of men and women grew loftily noble, their thoughts rose high, their life pulsed deep and strong; the desire of the young was turned away from idle pleasure and low ambition and directed into worthy aspirations, while, through all classes, a gentler grace and richer dignity uncon-

sciously clothed common life with the manners fashioned as the fruit of noble mind. Such was society in the palmy days of Athens, in the fresh youth of Venice, mentally if not morally in the Medicœan Florence, and in Weimar in the time of Goethe.

Unfortunately for us neither of these principles of classification draws our lines. No hereditary aristocracy is marked off as the acknowledged society. A few old families and some small circles of the *literati* sit apart in proud isolation from the general society, somewhat as the Faubourg St. Germain held aloof from the court of the Empire; while all around them there is going on a miscellaneous scramble for position in that world of the fashionables which is duly reported in the society papers.

In this society rank, being regulated by no recognized authority, is to be won as well by luck as by merit. In such a *mêlée* our chief social force will come to the front. The weight of well-filled pockets will press open the doors, and "they say he is very rich" will introduce one to this earthly paradise.

Wealth must always count largely among the factors of social prestige, for it is the symbol of power. Rightly won it represents industry, skill, talent, character—and these are qualities that fit men for leadership. It must needs be, in an industrial civilization, that the force which gives one a mastery in the business world shall draw around it a certain deference in social life. But really it is needful to say, that the qualities which insure success in the world of trade do

not necessarily make one a model of courtesy and culture; that, on the contrary, it is quite probable that the absorbing devotion to business by which alone, in our fierce competition, a man has won large wealth, if honestly acquired in legitimate traffic, has disqualified him from becoming a pattern of good manners, by debarring him from the culture of that "noble mind" of which true manners are the outward expression. It is needful also to say, that such admirable qualities as may be developed by the upright man of business do not necessarily entail upon his wife and daughters; that the opening of a heavy account in a Wall Street bank or the establishment of a good name in the Traders' Directory are not, in themselves, sufficient capital for the would-be social *modistes*. The wretched American notion that wealth alone can create a good society is the cause of the coarse and vulgar tone which characterizes our social habits in so many ways; our materialistic ideas of pleasure, our showy extravagance in dress, our barbaric notions of ornamentation, our lack of dignity and reverence, our superficial education, and many other evils which afflict us in the loss of true standards of cultivation.

Nor is this the worst of the matter. If only well-won and well-used wealth qualified for social distinction, little objection could be raised to such a standard in a mercantile community like our own. But when wealth in itself—the possession of money without reference to the methods of its acquisition or the principles of its use—opens the doors of society, gains the

quick recognition of its leaders, and emboldens any one to aspire after that leadership, an industrial civilization receives a deadly injury. The standards of social honor are falsified, and all our admeasurings of ourselves and of one another must be confused; all our ambitions and aspirations be turned awry; all our codes of conduct in the daily intercourse of business suffer a fatal lowering of tone. The one hopeless disease of a mercantile community is mammon-worship, the exaltation of money above all other forces, the judgment of all things in life at the throne of the golden god. It is wellnigh impossible down town to avoid the money estimate of men and things, for with that aspect everyone's mind is necessarily filled. If on coming up town the flushed devotee of the Almighty Dollar finds himself emergent into a purer, higher atmosphere, where life is viewed in other lights than the golden glimmerings of the gain-god, there is an antidote to the fever of covetousness malariously sapping our noblest strength. It is the true function of society, in such communities as our own, to call men away from the demoralizing influences of the business world, into a sphere where there is a *best*, other far than "the best that money can buy"; to hold up standards of social requirement high above the reach of mere wealth; to require, as the passport to its circles, other tickets than bank cheques; to ordain, as the fashion in dresses and decorations and amusements a style which draws upon something else than long purses; to bring together the real *élite* of a city,

with some aim higher than that of vulgar display and animal indulgence.

How far our modern society is from any such ideal everyone, who knows aught of it, understands too well; anyone who reads the popular society-novels feels too keenly. "Miss Kilmansegg and her Golden Leg" is scarcely a satire upon modern society. Up town as well as down town it is all "gold, gold, nothing but gold;" and our *élite*, who are worth ever so much gold, gather in halls which are beautified by all that gold can purchase, to display their dresses, artistically elegant at so many dollars a yard, to eat and drink to repletion over the *carte blanche* table, and to talk of the one common source and fount of all this blessing—gold: a veritable order of the *Golden Fleece!* In this, as in every other particular, the spirit of the age comes forth most strikingly in our country, the latest born child of Humanity, the representative of the present, as Europe is of the past.

Mr. Mill, with coarse but cutting rebuke, described America as the land where "the men are worshippers of the Almighty Dollar, and the women breeders of more such worshippers." Our men, from the necessities of existence, have been material, and our women have failed to redeem their higher aims. Murray Hill has fallen down with Wall Street before the mammon-altar.

As a result of this apostacy of woman from the ideal faith which, as priestess of the beautiful and spiritual, it is hers to guard, we have the national apos-

tasy from honor that is shaming us before the world to-day. The ideals of society will always be the aspirations of the business world, that which determines social position up town surely ordaining the work wrought down town. With a society whose happy halls open to the magic clink of money, there will of necessity be a business world sacrificing everything to the winning of this omnipotent charm. Where success, like charity, covers a multitude of sins, that success will not be forfeited for a few scruples. One can safely sin to win the power which procures absolution for all offences. When the suspicious millionnaire is received smilingly, and his uncultured daughters and rakish sons are courted everywhere, society becomes an "association for the promotion of commercial dishonor." So long as our women are satisfied with a society whose attractions are ratable by money values, the lavishness of dresses, the luxuriance of adornments, the sumptuousness of the table; so long as they are weak enough to allow in their drawing-rooms coarse and vulgar wealth, dishonor gilded over with high sounding names, impurity well-dressed and nicely-gloved—so long will it be impossible for church or state to exorcise the demon of fraud, or the evil spirit of lust. If to-day men knew that wrong in Wall Street would close the doors of Murray Hill upon them, there would be a shutting out from a heaven in which they devoutly believe.

To be "cut" here would be a penalty having more terrors for this class of gentlemen than to be pros-

pectively "damned" hereafter. "Remember," said a Scotch judge to a criminal escaping by some technicality from the grasp of the law, "that the eyes of the Almighty and of the Edinburgh police are upon you." A man who has perhaps slipped the sense of that all-following Eye which never for one moment loses sight of him, will still quail before the eyes of the social police.

I ask you, young women, to determine that, so far as in you lies, in whatsoever social circles you move, the question of *personnel* shall have some higher standards of "worth" than those admeasuring real estate and government bonds. You know the old *bon mot*, that in Philadelphia society asks concerning a new comer, Who is he? — in Boston, What does he know?—in New York, What is he worth? You know, also, as I know, that of our truly "best society" that witticism is utterly untrue, that therein the standards are as high as in any city of the land, and that in these innermost circles the old time honor and much of the old time simplicity still reign; while of the great outlying circles of the fashionable world we all know that the rebuke is only too well merited, and that the city to which the new-made wealth of the land resorts, for the full enjoyment of life, has established an order of the Plutocracy, which ranks its hierarchy by the figures carried after the dollar mark.

Would it not be an ambition worthy of our womanhood to fashion in our leading city a truly noble society; an association of the real *élite* of our com-

munity, in all dignity and honor, in all the graciousness of manners that must ever clothe the inner graciousness of soul?

II.

Society being, as we have seen, the social life of the class which civilization frees from the necessity of servile toil, the question next arising is—What relation does this beautiful flower life bear to the toiling life of roots and stem and branches on which it is supported? What is the end sought by nature in the evolution of this favored upper class? Has the flower any function in the common life of the plant? Is the proper commingling of the *élite* of earth, in elegant and refined enjoyments, the aim before that Spirit moving through civilization towards a larger life of man?

The old world aristocracies have practically answered these questions in their habits. Released from toil, living upon the labors of others, they have for generations seemed to recognize no other and higher aim than the pleasures of social life. Dressing, dining, visiting, travelling, attending balls, lounging at operas, driving in the parks when everybody was out, have been seriously regarded as the occupations of the men and women most favored with the advantages that minister to culture and thus to power. It has been actually accepted as the normal order of things that an aristocratic class should exist in every community, to whose production the whole life of the social organism should

work; the blossoming of labor into wealth, of culture into grace, of knowledge into power; and that this beautiful flower of civilization should be like the lilies of the field, which toil not neither do they spin, idle, purposeless, its task pleasure, its duty enjoyment, its business recreation, its work play. There is little time left English society for aught beyond the social etiquette. In the evolution of civilization society has thrown itself off from the seething, common mass of humanity, rounded its form into a sphere of its own, and moves on its way about the larger orb, in complete isolation. Society takes no cognizance of duties to the public, its responsibility to heaven being discharged when all calls have been duly returned.

We are beginning to follow in the steps of the old world. As wealth increases and civilization advances, a class is forming on the surface which is largely released from toil, and decreasingly concerned either with the cares of business or the responsibilities of public life, and thus left free to cultivate the social relationships and create a technical society. This society already demands of its members a devotion of time and strength which leaves little room for other occupations, save those of recuperation; and thus increasingly separates those who mingle in it from the life of the busy world without. The incessant patrol of acquaintanceship etiquette demands, the constant shopping the changing and luxurious fashions of the day necessitate, the duty of being seen on all the occasions of social dress parade, the late hours of our evening entertain-

ments, with the physical exertion involved in dancing, when thus prolonged on into the early morning, the nervous drain which this unnatural excitement entails —all this is making very real, for health of body, mind and soul, the old choice between the service of the world and any service of God in humanity. One frequently hears people say—I must give up society, it leaves me no time or strength for anything else; I must either forsake it wholly, or devote myself to it. Society accepts the alternative, and demands of its members that they shall devote themselves to its special duties, that they shall live in and for them; so that society men can hardly undertake any other responsibilities, or society women any other occupations; the state and the church alike must waive all claim upon them, and the family know them intimately—at the breakfast table!

Now, my friends, I do assure you that if there is anything certain in social science, it is that while civilization does always travail to bring forth a class freed from wearying work and corroding care, it is by no means with a view to the happiness of this *élite* few, but to the welfare of the great common mass of humanity. It is a foreordination, not to selfish indulgence, but to unselfish service. There is an election of nature as of grace, but it is no favoritism in the one case or in the other. Our Mother Nature is no more partial than our Father God.

The plant toils unto the flower, but the flower blooms for the plant, busily engaged in the highest

and noblest activity of the organism; sublimating all its energies, drawing out the inner yearnings of the very soul of the bush, realizing before every lower member the ideal glory of the plant-life, and bodying that life into forms which shall conserve and perpetuate the reach of being won.

Wealth exists to secure leisure, and leisure is the condition of culture, and culture is the providential ordination of humanity's kings and priests. Labor toils to upbear wealth, that it may be free to work for the higher needs of the community, that it may become capital, making and ordering employment for those whose cry is, No man hath hired us; that it may assume public cares and philanthropic obligations; that it may toil for the bread which perisheth not, the truth and beauty on which men live, as on the words proceeding from out the mouth of God; that thus in every state there may be a true Commonwealth. Where this favored few of any community have been willing to make a business of these higher needs of the people, devoting themselves as seriously to their public responsibilities as their less fortunate neighbors have done to the tasks of bread-winning, finding in society only their well-won recreation, prosperity and peace have smiled upon the city.

Where this *élite* class has forsworn the obligations of its position, and, thrusting aside the disturbing faces of the poor and ignorant, pitilessly appealing in their dumb despair for righteous law and wise employ and gracious truth, has used its privileges of leisure and

wealth and power for selfish pleasure, there have been, slumberous beneath the bright surface, depths of dogged discontent; eruptive through the surface, forces of fearful fury; earthquake shakings, volcanic belchings, waste of arid anarchy. Into one or other of these pregnant epitomizings is summed up the story of every nation, in every age.

Each era of happy order discloses a true nobility as the head of the body corporate, an aristocracy of some sort, nobly strong and wise and good.

Every era of wretched disorder discloses that anomaly of which the prophet wrote so ironically, a headless social organism, a state in which the born leaders of the people cared for nothing but their own indulgence, a veritable ignobility whose realm soon became chaos. Greece and Rome in olden times, and every nation of Europe in more modern days, have read the same story. There is no room on this earth for a non-productive class. The produce may be of a higher sort than is garnered in material thrift, even of the gleanings gathered by him who sang—

> "One harvest from thy field
> Homeward brought the oxen strong;
> A second crop thine acres yield,
> Which I gather in a song."

But some yield to the commonwealth every class must furnish, or the edict goes forth, Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? This is the handwriting which many an old-world aristocracy is reading on the walls of the social fabric.

In this apostasy of society from its providential responsibilities lies the secret of the growing social uneasiness through Europe, of the new and alarming social agitations in our own land.

France is the country which, above all others, illustrates the true function of society, by the glory that gathered round the nation in the days when her dukes and lords were really duces, leaders, and loaf-wards, guardians of the people; and by the confusion and anarchy in which her fair order has been submerged, when her nobles lost all sense of trusteeship, and pleasure, not duty, became the motto of her aristocracy.

Taine's *Ancient Regime* is a powerful and brilliant homily upon this theme. With his usual philosophic insight, and in his brilliant, sparkling style, Mr. Taine analyzes the causes leading to the break up of the historic social order, in the chaos of the Revolution.

His first and chief indictment is against the classes which were originally evolved by the social organism for the functions of guidance and rulership, and which faithlessly betrayed this headship of the body to selfish indulgence; drawing away the vital currency from the members and bringing on a social apoplexy; developing, in the fatal folly of selfishness, the disorders under which they perished.

"Divorced from the people they misuse them; nominal chiefs, they have unlearned the function of an effective chief; having lost all public character they abate nothing of their private advantages. So much the worse for the canton, and

so much the worse for themselves! . . . When sovereignty becomes transformed into a sinecure it becomes burdensome without being useful, and on becoming burdensome without being useful it is overthrown. . . .

"Such is the first and fatal effect of privileges turned to selfish purposes instead of being exercised for the advantage of others. To him who utters the word, sire or superior means the protector who feeds, the ancient who leads. With this title and for this purpose too much cannot be granted to him, for there is no more difficult nor more exalted function. But he must fulfil its duties; otherwise in the day of peril he will be left to himself.

"Long before the final crash, France is in a state of dissolution, and she is in a state of dissolution because the privileged classes had forgotten their characters as public men." —*Ancient Regime*, Book i. ch. 4.

Never before had a nation so completely run out into efflorescence. France was one vast drawing-room. Its symbol still stands for our instruction in righteousness — Versailles, the mummied city of *le Grand Monarque*, mutely eloquent with unutterable pathos. The brilliant idleness of that drawing-room epoch is revealed in the splendid palace, the stately park, the bewitching gardens for whose production the famine-stricken land went hungry, and in whose pleasures the *élite* of the nation laughed life away.

That gorgeous society is the nation's life-yield.

"Men and women each is a selection; they all are of the accomplished class, gifted with every grace which race, education, fortune, leisure, and custom can bestow; they are perfect of their kind. There is no toilet, no carriage of the head, no tone of the voice, no expression in language which is not a master-

piece of worldly culture, the distilled quintessence of all that is exquisitely elaborated by social art. It is said that a hundred thousand roses are required to make an ounce of the unique perfume used by Persian kings; such is this drawing-room, the frail vial of crystal and gold containing the substance of a human vegetation. To fill it, a great aristocracy had to be transplanted to a hot-house and become sterile in fruit and flowers, and then in the royal alembic its pure sap is concentrated into a few drops of aroma. The price is excessive, but only at this price can the most delicate perfumes be manufactured."—*Ancient Regime,* Book ii. ch. 3.

In producing this fine flower the whole organism is exhausted. The roots shrink, the stem shrivels, the leaves fall. Every brilliant idler above draws up into his useless life the blood of many starved drudges. Death follows naturally. Versailles stands deserted forever. After the drawing-room epoch comes the revolution; the idleness of pleasure and then the idleness of the grave. A splendid, sumptuous, serviceless society, dissolving the social order in chaos.

"To-day the king will do nothing," used to be the frequent morning bulletin in this superb court; meaning, not that the royal head of the nation would that day devote himself to no affairs of the country, but, that he would not—hunt! To hunt having become the business of the elegant gentleman, he was soon hunted through the land by the people he had forgotten—the sport of the *sans culottes* proving so aristocratic a game as king-stalking. Versailles would not come down to Paris, fashioning lives of noble use;

caring only to enjoy itself amid its gay gardens in luxurious idleness; and so Paris came out to Versailles, in fashions by no means beautiful and only very partially useful; tumultuous, barbaric, lawless, bare-headed, bare-armed, hoarsely shouting "bread"; the courtly ladies, patterns of idle irresponsibility and wanton pleasure, yielding to the *canaille's* fashion-plates—the hair gathered tightly round the head, the throat uncovered, and the wooden collar with the sharp steel shining in the sun above!

And I pray you to remember that the condemnation social science passes upon such sham society is only the ratification of the earlier and more solemn judgment declared by religion. The first question it puts to every soul is that famous interrogation with which the stern divines of Westminster began their instruction of the youthful conscience — verily a world-old question stirring in the souls of every race in every age — "What is the chief end of man?" Upon that question hinges every aim, every endeavor of life upward or downward, toward the life of God or the life of the brutes that perish. There have never been more than two general answers to that question. Some have said, "To *have* a good time," their philosophy shaping itself into epicureanism; their soul-cry, "O Happiness! our being's end and aim;" their code of conduct, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;" their lullaby song the dream musing of the lotos-eaters; and thus living the higher aspirations within them have shrunken, till the word written of

old has come to pass—"She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

Others have answered to that query of the life-sphynx, in the thought, if not always in the words, of those earnest Puritans—"To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever;" to find out the will of the Living Lord and do it; to learn the laws of life and obey them; and in doing this will, in obeying these laws, to reveal the wisdom and goodness of the Eternal Spirit, so that men in reverent joy shall adore their Father in heaven; and in the pure delight of this truth taught, this service wrought, the soul shall enjoy God forever. Having a good time for one's self, or making a good time for others; play or work; pleasure or duty—these are the polar opposites of life, towards one or other of which every being tends.

An alternative this which is practically answered for every state by its "society," the life of those released from the occupations enforced by necessity, and free therefore to make their choice of life's aim. As society has lived so have all below aspired to live, and so has the real creed of a people, the faith in which they live, been shaped, not by the church but by the world. In vain, O women, shall the pulpit teach seriousness of aim in life, if society preaches frivolity and idle pleasure-seeking; in vain shall the church urge the unselfish service of humanity, if the world puts forth as fashion-plates for its approved style of "the gentleman" and "the lady," the idle, self-indulgent drone. To no purpose shall the state seek to

fashion noble lives, devoted to high purposes, while the recognized *modistes* of our manners and morals throw outward upon their lives the forms of spirits wholly given to pleasure.

III.

SOCIETY having as its true function the provision of proper play for the higher order of workers, the next question that arises is concerning the character of the play it invents and sanctions. What fashions does it set up as the ideal amusements for the finest specimens of human beings? A question of deeper reach than appears on the surface.

Play is any action of body or of mind which is its own aim and reward, which we put forth for no ulterior purpose beyond the interest and pleasure found in the activity. It may be a very time-consuming, energy-absorbing sport, quite like work, but, if it is the spontaneous action of our impulses and not a task enforced by necessity, it still is play. The horse turned loose into the field spends quite as much force in his wild gallop round the enclosure as in a good hour's pull under harness; but it is sheer delight of instinctive activity in the one case, play; and in the other case it is obedience to the constraint of his equine providence, and is work. By its play rather than by its work all life is really revealed. The canaries, laboriously tugging at the little carriages which hold their seed, the kittens demurely going through their rope-exercises at the corners of the streets, furnish

scant information to the would-be student of the natural history of the Finch family, or of the *Felis domestica.* Hopping from bough to bough in the woods of their island home, swelling their tiny throats with gleeful song, gaily dancing in aerial mazes beneath the tropic sun; frisking before the bright hearth-fire, on the soft rug, rolling, tumbling, twisting in endless convolutions and aimless busyness—the canary character and the kitten nature are disclosed.

Man's work is not usually under his choice or control. We find certain things that must be done in order that we may exist, and these necessities constitute human work; man's labor of agriculture, or manufacture, or trade, or commerce; woman's toil of housekeeping and child-rearing; the care of health and property and morals in state and church.

The character of an individual or of a community will of course come forth in the manner in which this necessary work is wrought. But when in this needful work there is leisure, and a man turns to play, then there is a revelation of his whole being, his physical, mental, and moral life. Where does he go and what does he do to amuse himself? His tastes reveal his innermost nature. His play measures his life.

The place of any people in civilization is scaled accurately by its plays — the fashions of its sportive activities. The Grecian games, wherein the flower of the youth contended in every trial of physical prowess, and the poets of the land sang their immortal verses; the evening camp of King Sekeletu in the Makalolo

village, where, in uncouth gyrations to barbaric clangor, the hideously decorated savages leap about like insane brutes; express the contrast between classic culture and savage stupidity. The *café chantons* and *opera bouffe* of Paris, the serious and noble evening *musicales* of the Prussian towns, difference the French and German civilizations. Our American Fourth of July, All-Fool's day, photographs the average cultivation of the sovereign people, and a London West-end ball-room mirrors the sordid materialism and selfish scheming of the nation of shopkeepers.

What a revelation of the social condition of our nineteenth century industrial civilization lies in the fact, that in some of the manufacturing districts of England the slaves of the forge and the loom call being off on sick-leave—"play."

As the play of a people expresses its culture and civilization, the degree of true humaness marking its evolution, so does it also react upon the national life; conforming the tastes to the patterns thus expressed, and moulding the desires of men and women by the despotic tyranny of habit; fashioning the manners and thus the morals of the land. Plato regarded the influence of play so seriously that, among his laws for the ideal state, he provided for the regulation of childhood's sports, declaring of their rash changing that "no greater evil can happen in a state; for he who changes the sports is secretly changing the manners of the young."—*Laws*, vii. 797.

Most beautiful, most wise, most blessed among the

developments of this wonderful age, we have learned from Mother Nature's own lips the new education of body, mind, and soul, by play—the Kindergarten.

Our adult plays are fashioned for us by society, the class which is free to act out its impulses and play in such wise as its culture prompts. One hears, it is true, of social *duties* and of their burdensomeness, but these occupations of the rich are only in a conventional sense necessities. They are the self-imposed etiquette of the city's idlers; accepted in the beginning because of the pleasure found in them, and persevered in when the zest has passed off, partly from the force of habit, and partly from the loss of other and nobler tastes than those ministered to by the life of society.

What, then, are the fashions of our society play?

(1.) First among the plays of society has always been *dressing*. Dressing is, to be sure, a necessity of some climates, but as such it would not occupy much time or thought. Only as it becomes a fine art, a method of adornment, an expression of taste—only as it seeks to clothe the body with rich material in beautiful colors and graceful forms, does it become an object of interest. As such it was the earliest of the fine arts, the first expression in the savage life of the love of beauty; and as such it still outranks nobler arts in popular estimation. Pictures and statues are the treasures of the few—beautiful and becoming dresses are the ambition of the many. The little girl finds her chief play in dressing her doll in bits of

finery; the servant's great delight is to issue on Sunday superb in "kids" and feathers; the wan operative stints her food to bedeck her form; the young lady returns from Europe happier in her Paris dresses than in all her other treasures of art. Wherever there is room in life for play, the sense of beauty and the desire for admiration, instinct in all womankind, will lead to the cultivation of dress as a fine art; alike in the beaded apron of the squaw and the Worth evening dress of the avenue belle.

The dress of the women of a nation becomes, therefore, an index of the people's culture; of its barbaric love of display, or its cultivated refinement of feeling; of its conventionality or vitality, its slavery to the arbitrary dicta of fashion or the individual exercise of judgment and taste; of its simplicity, genuineness and purity, or of its luxuriance, artificiality and corruption. Know fully the dress of a people and you can measure its civilization; the command over nature it has won, the mastery of mechanical arts it has outworked, the development of mental life it has reached, the moral character it has formed. The costume departments in our international exhibitions would be among the most instructive features of these big schools, if instead of staring at them in idle curiosity we thoughtfully studied them. The genius of a people is labelled in its clothes. The graceful cloak and bewitching mantilla of Spain, the quaint, stiff peasant garb of Sweden and Norway, the baggy, slouchy indifferentism of the German male attire, the

absolute unideality and unindividuality of our American "store clothes," the sense-alluring voluptuousness which lurks in every fold and form of the French modes, reveal more concerning the genius of these peoples than pretentious volumes.

In thus expressing the inner spirit of a people, the dress of a nation patterns its ideals of taste, and by these fashions the character of the young; moulding them in habits of economy or extravagance ; inculcating in them lessons of self-restraint or self-assertion; disciplining them into true refinement or fostering them in general loudness—most expressive term ; inspiring them with the spirit of modesty or unzoning their souls in wanton looseness. What a noble education lay in the early Grecian type of feminine attire, the hair drawn quietly back and twisted into the simple knot, the long, close-fitting garment, clasping the throat and falling to the feet, in utter refusal to display the flesh, while revealing the form in every fold.

And what an ignoble education into all the lore of the lower nature is there in the full toilette of our nineteenth century Christian society; the evening dress and ballet-tights of the opera; nudity above the waist in the boxes, the counterfeit of nudity below the waist on the stage! It was not the sensationalism of a court preacher but the intuition of a true prophet—an ethical student of social science—which led Isaiah to see in the dresses of the fine ladies of the capital a sign of the moral state of the nation, and

a chief factor in that condition; and inspired his pen-portrait of the Jerusalem fashions in the age of Uzziah.

"The daughters of Zion are haughty,
And walk with stretched forth necks
And wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing as they go,
And making a tinkling with their feet:
Therefore the Lord will take away
The bravery of their ankle-rings,
And their little suns, and their little moons,
The ear-drops and the bracelets and the veils,
The head-dresses and the ankle-chains and the girdles,
And the scent-boxes and the amulets,
The rings and nose jewels,
The holiday clothes and the mantles,
And the handkerchiefs and the purses,
The mirrors and the linen garments
And the turbans and the shawls."

Herr Teufelsdrock was right. There is a philosophy in clothes!

It is, then, no trivial matter how we dress. Though it be play it is serious in its consequences upon our nation. The changes of our fashions are moral *indicia* which need to be carefully considered; moral forces which need to be pondered by our social modistes. Of the early Venetians it was written by one of their own historians, that "they invented that which might clothe themselves with modesty and honor."

Does our society invent anything? Dressing as a fine art must obey the law of all art—as to the correlation of vitality and originality. Living art never

blindly copies traditional forms. It is always fresh. Even the canonical forms it will alter in myriad ways according to the individuality of the workman. It is as unstereotyped as nature. The Gothic cathedral is full of individuality, originality, inventiveness. Each workman puts his own vital taste into his special bit of carving, and so there is the infinite variety of life. The moment art ceases to invent — to modify and adapt the great canons by individual thought and feeling, and becomes conventional, it begins to die.

Judged by this test can our American society lay claim to any real artistic character in its dressing? Does it invent aught; or does it not rather servilely copy the fashion-plates issued from the old world, and our *bon ton* wait at each change of the seasons to be told, from over the water, how it shall array itself? That, in the "land of the free," American women really dare not refuse the most monstrous folly, the most palpable impurity which "fashion," *i. e.*, the Parisian modistes, ordains; dare not dress themselves as they know decent or becoming — is also of considerable more ethical than æsthetic importance. We could endure the loss of all individuality of taste, the dull reign of the conventional which robs life of so much charm in this age of democratic levelling—but are we quite sure that we will not suffer irretrievably in the moral influence of this uninventiveness? If dressing were a real fine art, it would, in being endlessly original, become expressive of the infinitely varied qualities

of human nature, and educate us thus in moral perceptions and distinctions; instead of which it hopelessly confuses all differences and blunts all the soul-senses. In a society vital enough to invent anything, leaving therefore each modiste room for the play of her own individuality—each woman would reveal herself in her attire; the sweet soul of purity fashioning its inner modesty into a lovely form, which would make the heart of man bow before the beauty that inspires without enticing; and would separate her unmistakably from the woman whose love of self, if nothing worse, enclothes her in a garb, every flaunting line and fold of which compels attention, challenges admiration, suggests desire. Britomart should not dress as Acrasia. Virtue and vice are labelled alike in being dressed alike, and so the fundamental moral education, the distinction between good and evil, is constantly thwarted. Even though it be known, as indeed in the styles it can so often be seen, that our fashions emanate from no true old world of the noble and the pure, but from the half world, whose inspiration in this fine art is sensual attraction, yet will our proud, free American society go on inventing nothing in place of these atrocities; servilely following after the manners of the nations before us, of the city which represents the life of the lusts of the flesh; so that when in Paris one sees specially loud costumes he hesitates not to say, "That woman is either an American or ——!" Have you, American women, the will to reject a fashion when it offends against taste or

purity, and the soul to invent that which shall clothe yourselves with modesty and honor?

(2.) Another of the plays of society, to which only an allusion can be made—since it opens too many and far-reaching social questions to allow of anything more than a glance within it—is Household Style. To beautify the home; to furnish it with rich materials in lovely forms and colors; to gather within its walls choice objects of art; to order its appointments in dignity and elegance, and make it the centre of a refined hospitality; to carry on the family life in honor among men—has always been an aim of woman, as she has sought to move in society. This, however, has very easily degenerated into wasteful extravagance and boastful display; the weak and low ambition of outshining rivals in sumptuousness and splendor. Where the spirit of this social play remains true and pure, it expresses and cherishes that sacred delight a domestic people always feel in rendering the home the centre of all joys—as we see in our midst in many a House Beautiful. Where this play of domestic æsthetics degenerates into social stylishness, it expresses and fosters the corruption of that very family life it nominally dignifies; eating out domestic happiness and honor—as we see in too many a fashionable household. For this is the most costly play in which society can indulge, and is rapidly, therefore, becoming the most dangerous. Palatial houses, artistic appointments, elegant equipages, retinues of servants, demand long purses. The topmost few in society set standards which, even in

lowlier imitations, task the abilities of men. Our increasing æsthetic cultivation multiplies our wants. To be *comme il faut* in one's household style requires ever larger means. We are forgetting that word of the Spirit of Progress, "See that ye walk not in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you," and are patterning our domestic style upon the models possible only in an old country, where an hereditary aristocracy hands down, by the right of primogeniture, from generation to generation, huge estates and accumulated fortunes. The result is our general living ahead of means for the sake of keeping up the proper style, whose dreadful fruitage is ripening around us in our rank crops of financial dishonor. The blame of this is chiefly to be laid at the feet of our women, who place upon the most devoted husbands any race produces the burden of paying for this costly play, by slavish toil or luck of speculation. The æsthetics and the ethics of household art may not agree. We may be cultivating, as many a people before us have done, an elegant refinement at the expense of elements more vital to a nation than upholstery and bric-a-brac.

(3.) Of all the plays of society one of the oldest of which we have record, the freshest still in its undying zest, is *the dance.*

In its essence, dancing is rhythmic motion, action ordered into grace and beauty by the sway of music. All vital action is delicious, and when, under the subtle influence of music, the movements of the body, growing fluently regular, become melodic; and the com-

binations of several forms, each swaying in a strain of graceful action, growing symmetric and proportionate, become harmonic—there is the poetry of motion, acted music. This has always been one of the tensest delights of the young, whose full-blooded vitality finds herein free, full, fitting expression. The dance has therefore existed among every people, varying in character with the spirit and culture of the race and age; gleesomely innocent in childhood, as the tortuous whirlings of the kitten, manifesting only fresh, untroubled, unsoiled life; uncouth, grotesque, horrible in savage tribes, expressing the superabundance of physical vitality, or, in the frenzy of the war-dance, the fury of barbaric cruelty — the overture to the revolting terrors of the battle-field; voluptuously beautiful in the slow swinging of the Egyptian Almehs, revealing the luxuriant lasciviousness which stirs in the hot blood of the tropics; solemnly joyous with restrained exuberance of emotion in the Hebrew Miriam, poising high her timbrel and leading forth her maidens to praise the Power which had wrought deliverance for Israel, or in the royal David going forth to meet the ark, the symbol and shrine of the Divine presence restored to his people—the tumultuous overflow of rich emotion carrying him away with that holy joy in which he danced before the Lord; fiendishly wild, the loosening of the animal passions ordinarily chained and imprisoned—a very devil's dance, in the French Can-Can. Very accurately you may, if you will, know the inner spirit, the real culture of any people by the way

it dances. Under the stately steppings of the old Hebrews you see the spirit of the grand righteousness-revering race, whose joy of fullest life became worship, whose holidays were holy-days. Under the voluptuous abandon, the licentious brilliance of the dances Paris has taught the world, in which all the resources of art are prostituted to stimulate the passional nature and seduce the senses, you find the very soul of the city which Matthew Arnold calls "the city of the average sensual man."

Here also, as in other instances, the expression of the life of a people which its society shapes, reacts upon that inner spirit, patterning pleasures after which, consciously or unconsciously, the young do yearn; and by the way society dances the manners and the morals of an age are subtly fashioned. The wisest of Grecian teachers long ago pointed out the fact that "rhythms, and music in general, are imitations of the good and evil characters in man."—*Laws*, vii. 798.

The question for society is—shall the highest life of a nation draw forth and express, in its dances, the good or the evil which is in men? Shall it fashion manners which idealize virtuous delights or sensual pleasures?

What are the dances which our society patterns? Contrast the minuet and the round dance, and you realize the difference between the society of the beginning and of the close of our first centennial. The courtesy and grace, the dignity and self-restraint, the modesty and purity of the minuet expressed and cultured the aspirations of that age, which, whatever its

frailties and follies of actual life, had as its ideal the nobly good in men which its courtly manners imitated and patterned—the spirit which pulsed in the heroic days of "76." The free familiarity of partnership, the loose undressing and the tight embracing, the absolute abandon to the rapture of physical life, in attitudes expressive of passion and seductive to the sense, which characterize the round dance; prolonged far through the night, under the emotional stimulus of rich foods and strong wines; symbolize the period which earnestly seeks out the evil that is in men, and unblushingly fashions it into the manners that mould our morals: the age which through a philosophy of despairing pessimism, a science of irresponsible automatonism, a poetry of fervid fleshliness, a fiction and a drama of splendid sensualism, an art which wantons in nudity and a music which reels in bacchanals, is tracing that sequence of re-evolution—"earthly, sensual, devilish;" material, voluptuous, fiendish; as all typed in the epochs of that city of the "average fleshly man" through which our generation has cycled — the renaissance of the Napoleonic idea, the second Empire, the Commune —*la gloire, l'amour, le terreur;* the court, the anonyma, the petroleuse.

Dancing, of some sort, we shall not soon dispense with on this earth which has seen *le bal de les victimes,* wherein, with crape around their arms, the sorrowful survivors of the Revolution danced their tragic *in memoriam* to the heroes and heroines of the guillotine. The dancing together of our young men and maidens

we must accept as among our modern improvements, though disallowed in so healthily human a society as that of the early Greeks. But a dance which shall imitate and pattern the good and not the evil in men we must have, or woe betide us. I speak in the interest of no ascetic religiousness, but of a wholesome humanism; which, recognizing the animal in us all and feeling no shame of it when mastered of mind and swayed by soul, finds in the winning of that mastery the first great trial of life; and would keep our youths pure-hearted, clean-fancied, chaste in thought and feeling as well as word and deed. Lord Byron was scarcely a prude; yet, in a poem on the Waltz, with its appended note, he gives his idea of the influences of the dances society has fashioned, with a frankness which ought to open any eyes. If our pure young girls could know the feelings wakened in the senses of the young men, or overhear some of the conversations that go on between the dances, they might have a revelation of the reasons which lead the men persistently to cut the girls who set their faces against this pretty play; and realize a personal outrage none the less actual because the victims are unconscious, none the less horrible in that it is sanctioned by society. We read how in ancient Babylon society compelled its maidens once a year to turn harlots in the great temple of Melitta, the Eastern Venus, as the fitting worship of the divinity of lust; and we shudder! Our Christian civilization only deflowers the souls of its maidens, and mercifully

opiates them for this! Our wonderful age of chloroform, which relieves us of honor as of limbs without shock or pain.

And what is it possible to say of the dances which he stage fashions for society; in which paterfamilias takes his daughters, with due provision of opera-glasses, to the bouffe-ballet; and religious respectability smilingly applauds the vision of the Mahometan paradise. Beautiful artistically, as the ballet is often made: a phantasmagoria of lovely forms and brilliant colors, wreathing themselves in kaleidoscopic crystallizations, which dissolve even as they shape themselves in fluent lines of light, as though by some magician's spell; every combination an exquisite blending of hues, a perfect patterning of figures; every surrounding of the *mise en scene* studied with minutest attention; every resource of taste and skill lavishly employed to create a living painting, which shall be brilliant, bewildering, bewitching; a work of art which interprets to us Goethe's eulogium of the stage-manager, as the patron of art; it may yet be in its very triumph of talent a temptation, the more dangerous because of its subtle charm; its beauty the imitation of the evil rather than of the good in men; the mirroring, in softest glamour, of the images the sensual nature conjures up; the apotheosis of the spirit of lustful fancy. It is no harsh judgment, no evil souled misreading of an innocent art, which finds this character in the ballet. Its historical origin betrays its nature. Its spirit is in its every feature.

It is instinct with subtle seduction to the senses. It is Art, beautiful even when fallen, turned pimp and pander, "procuress to the lord of hell." And society endorses it, and completes the fashioning of manners which the drawing-room begins; the manners of an age whose refined sensualism is breaking up the family, enervating the church, undermining the state in a general dissoluteness, a wide-spread "ooze and thaw of wrong."

I appeal to you, women of society, in the name of all womanly purity assoiled, in the name of all manly honor seduced; of the virtue rapidly becoming a myth in the fashionable belief, and of the God evanishing from the sight of the impure-hearted world; to count it no trivial thing to fashion, even in our dances, purer manners than those debasing our morals to-day. Every true woman should refuse to join in the public round dance, or to be seen at the opera-bouffe.

If one coterie in the fashionable world would dare to rule out objectionable forms of dancing, others would follow. Which set will pioneer this woman's reform of social manners and morals? What is it that excuses women who know, in their inmost souls, the truth of all now said, from acting out their real convictions, save that trite apology—"The young men demand it." And is it then true, as a keen satirist of our society lately wrote, that in New York the young men rule society? While clamorous for wider spheres of power, has the queen of society suffered her wonder-working sceptre to fall from her nerveless grasp? Do

you accept your edict of *déchéance?* Modistes of manners, priestesses before the altars of the social omnipotence, have you no visions of nobler fashions, no inspiration to command their acceptance by men?

Let me read to you the story of how the guardians of society in Egypt, long, long ago, exercised themselves to fashion dances which should imitate and culture the good that is in men; commending it to the thought of our American modistes. "They consecrate every sort of dance or melody, first ordaining festivals—calculating for the year what they ought to be, and at what time, and in honor of what Gods . . . they ought to be celebrated. . . This is to be arranged at first by certain persons. . . and if anyone offers any other hymns or dances to any one of the Gods, the priests and priestesses, with the consent of the guardians of the law, shall religiously and lawfully exclude him. . . . No one in singing or dancing shall offend against public and consecrated models, and the general fashion among the youth."—*Laws,* book vii. 799, 800.

IV.

In its very name society stands committed to the function of developing social life in humanity; the commingling of men and women in mutual interests and pleasures; the cultivation of a true association among mankind. Civilization is association.

Its germ lies in some rudimentary community; the family which blends individualities in a larger common

life; the tribe which combines families by the sentiment of kinship, by the necessity of security for person and property. It progresses with the increasing need and capacity of combination which associative life develops; interests and pleasures becoming ever increasingly interwoven.

Individual life can attain full development only as it forms part of a larger common life; private wealth growing only under a commonwealth; genius being the flowering out in one bud of the rich life that stirs in the whole organism. All this necessity for association is the providential provision for human education; which is chiefly carried on through this social commingling. Morality—the duties we owe our fellows—is the evolution of the sense of right, conscience, under the various relations of life; from the association of the play-room to the association of the business world. Thus men are led out of themselves, compelled to regard others, drawn into fellowship of interests and sympathies, borne out into the larger life of commingling spirits, in whose deep currents there is felt the movement of the spirit of Humanity, the eternal flow of the Spirit of God.

In this social education of individual men and women into a common-unity — a community — "society," technically so called, has a prominent part. It is pre-eminently the social sphere, where out of individual occupations and interests, cares and pleasures, — from the office, the studio, the household — men and women draw together to recreate themselves, in

thoughts and things which can be shared by all; to meet in mind as well as in body on some general ground, the unfenced common of the broad humanities, over which moves the fresh breath of the Spirit of Truth and Beauty. Society, if it be not a mockery of its name, exists to promote this escape from the sluggish channels of individual existence into the swift currents of the larger life of Humanity; to cheer by social fellowship and strengthen by social interaction; to provide the conditions in which thought shall quicken minds and art inspire souls, and warm human sympathies spring into action under the touch of happy intercourse. Such has society been many times in the world's history, as notably among the French, the masters of the social art, in the *salons* of such gifted women as Mad. Recamier, Mad. Roland, Mad. du Scarron.

How is it with our society? Does it provide opportunities and facilities for the noble art of conversation, —the most refreshing of all recreations, when rightly ordered, because most directly the contact of mind with mind? That our society does not culture this fine art he knows who recalls the buzzing noise, the clatter of tongues which stuns the late comer in one of our drawing-room gatherings; who remembers the dreary inanities, the trite commonplaces, the vapid small-talk, the stinging scandal into which this general Babel breaks up, as he wanders from group to group, hearkening to this counterfeit of conversation. Plainly, any true talking together is neither

sought nor desired. Our huge crushes overflow the drawing-rooms and crowd the halls and the stairs with women whose supreme concern is to get room enough to spread out their trails, and with men whose absorbing anxiety is to keep from treading on them. Borne hither and thither by the surging tides the uneasy mass of human atoms forms and breaks in endless momentary groupings—offering conditions wholly fatal to any real conversation. A sand-heap of shifting grains is not the type of organized association; a crowd is not a society. To get a common life, a social state, even for one evening, there must be a few well-assorted people who will flow naturally together in sympathetic thought and feeling; and then the tact of the hostess must make an atmosphere which thaws out reserve, fuses mind with mind and crystallizes souls around some nucleating fellowship. It need not be a symposium of eminent *savans* or illustrious *literati*, but merely a gathering of people of fair culture, *i. e.*, of such a cultivation of any of the humanities as opens to them the common springs of real thought, and wells up within them the speech which every one heareth in his own tongue.

Nor are the other social elements better provided in our society gatherings. Music, the language of the emotions, ought to do for the inarticulate feelings that which conversation aims to do for the articulate thoughts; the one drawing out the soul of men into common sympathy in noble passion, as the other draws out their minds into common understanding of noble

ideas. Music has been assigned, by some of the wisest teachers of the world, a chief place in the culture of morality; and not without reasons palpable to us all. Morality is right conduct of man towards man. In right conduct, right feeling is a more powerful factor than right-thinking. Emotions are the motivities in most action. To feed a soul with noble emotions, to pulse through it habitually strains of pure, lofty feeling, is to fill it with the forces of all sweet impulses, all pure passion. Music is the social art; requiring association for its full development, the blending of individual melodies in harmonic order: the very symbol of that subtle sway of law in which, through all existence, parts draw together into a whole, rhythmic, orderly, beautiful. Music is therefore the art which will form the crystallizing thread in any attempt at a real society.

The old fable repeats itself ever, and Orpheus, in myriad forms, draws the living stones together into social order, in rhythmic response to the subtle sway of music. Men can be sung together in fervid enthusiasm, as in Luther's Reformation or the Revival of the German Fatherland. The quiet domestic evening gatherings of Germany, where friends come together to enjoy themselves in vocal and instrumental music, present one of the finest types of the blending of recreation and culture and genuine good-fellowship. Even where musical culture is not sufficiently advanced to allow of this participation by the guests in the performances of the evening, it might surely be

possible to provide for their enjoyment of good music, as one of the elements of true recreation. With the many organizations in this city, vocal and instrumental, worthily cultivating the various schools of music; and with the wide range of selection, from grave to gay, from lively to severe, it might surely be possible for our "best society" to utilize this truly social art for our pleasure and profit, with no greater outlay than for the sumptuous catering of a fancy *restaurateur*.

In the absence of any provision for the promotion of social feeling through rational conversation or enjoyable music, society falls back on such lower sociableness as good cheer induces, or such utterly unsociable enjoyment as selfishness can evoke out of this caricature of fellowship.

The disgusting piggishness which our supper-rooms so often exhibit is the logical issue of an attempt to promote sociability by appeals to the enjoyment of the body alone. Manifold forms of petty and degrading selfishness, evolved directly in this society, are the inevitable consequences of the neglect of the conditions of true sociability. In the absence of any higher enjoyment people are not drawn out of themselves; and after huddling together like the grains of the sand-heap, thrown for a moment into juxtaposition, they fall apart, unrefreshed in spirit and weary in body. Proffering no noble interest society leaves people to interest themselves, as each one's promptings lead; the lover of gossip throws herself into the noble sport of mud-slinging, and the lover of admiration

displays herself before the mirroring eyes of the assemblage; and the drawing-room becomes a Scandal Exchange, an Exhibition Room for the Latest Styles of Dresses—rather perhaps of the lack of dresses, save as carpeting—a Marriage Mart! The feelings evoked are a burlesque of sociableness; rivalry in the place of fellowship, envy and jealousy, pride and vanity instead of any common pleasures and sympathetic joys. At last, where there is no mental stimulus, no heart-cheer, no soul-joy, physical gratifications pall. Our amusements bore us. Amid our round of social pleasures the world of fashion suffers *ennui.* Society is *blasé.*

Of the many evils following upon this loss of a real society one should be very significant to women—the growth of club life among men. The fact that sensible men increasingly shun society means that fashionable women no longer know how to make genuine social recreation, or do not care to exert themselves to do it. It means thus the dethronement of woman from her social empire. It means the building up of an abnormal masculine society divorced from the refining, purifying influence of true womanhood. It will ultimately mean, through this separation of that which God hath joined, with us, as with every other people whose society has become insipid, new and unrecognizable associations on the part of a demoralized manhood; virtue's stupidity exchanged for the vivacity of vice. When Athenian matrons failed to make a society which could attract the men of cul-

ture, the semi-society of the *hetairæ* arose under the empire of Aspasia, half-philosopher, half-courtesan. When French girls, badly educated in convent schools, failed to hold the brilliant Parisians, there grew up, beneath the surface of society, another anonymous society, a *demi-monde*, whose wit fascinated the minds of men, while its beauty enthralled their bodies.

Is America to repeat the oft-told story? Alas for the nation, if its women are not sufficiently cultured to create a true society! I cannot but believe that our women are intelligent enough — as I know that they are beautiful enough and pure enough—to fashion a real society; where, without losing its first function of amusement, a higher function of culture shall be evolved, in a rational recreation, a refreshing conversation, an inspiring art, an ennobling intercourse. Such a true society would be a power magnificent enough to satisfy the aspirations of the most ardent champion of woman's rights; a force back of pulpit, press, and platform in the development of that nineteenth century omnipotence—public opinion; a gathering more dictatorial in national policy than caucuses; a tribunal more authoritative in enforcing social morality than courts; a council more determinative of personal beliefs than conventions and synods. But for any such true society we must have smaller assemblages, drawn together on some rational principle of affiliation, some real sympathy of mind and soul, under wisely ordered conditions. To make such society we must perhaps await the coming woman; intellectual,

æsthetic, beautiful; the capable modistes of manners; the worthy fashioners of morals.

> "For manners are not idle, but the fruit
> Of loyal nature and of noble mind."

V.

Society will always be what woman makes it. Around her it revolves, responsive to the influence which streams from her; her charm the subtle attraction which binds it together; her nature the law to its obedient orbits. Womanhood will ever be the fashioner of manners and of morals. As is the womanhood, so will be the manners and the morals.

The Greek ideal of womanly beauty fluctuated between two visions; each of which, glorified by poetry and art, lifted upon the heavenly heights a form that drew the admiration of men and fashioned lives obedient to the image worshipped; the one inspiring men with ardent yearning for the soulfulness shining through its noble loveliness, spiritualizing them by love to ever higher reaches of glorious being; the other inflaming men with passionate desire for the fleshliness instinct in its ignoble charm, animalizing them through lust into ever lower depths of base existence; patterning manners whose gracious purity has made the early Grecian life the model for the world's best societies, or whose loose levity fashions still the morals of every wanton age. From two immortal marbles these ancient dreams of beauty look forth still upon the world.

Through the long vista in the Louvre opened by the ranks of inferior statues which usher one before the world-famous figure, rises the Venus of Melos, the glorious ideal of noble womanhood; utmost richness of form chastened into severest purity, by the might of mind and strength of soul which crown the perfect body with the divine head; a veritable Venus Victrix, victor over every lawless impulse of the lower nature. While, in the ideal beauty of womanhood, mind mantled matter and spirit shone through body; while the actual women of Greece shaped above their pure lives this vision of soulful loveliness, a society of matchless grace and culture grew around these fashioners of a nobly-mannered life.

Perfectly proportioned, exquisitely shaped, richly rounded into voluptuous loveliness, expressing neither in form nor feature aught of soulfulness, stands in Florence the Venus de Medici; the image of that vision of sensual seductiveness in which all physical passion idealized itself and was glorified. Poetry wove its spell around this deification of desire. Art cast its glamour over it. Men fell down in homage before it crying, in anticipation of that phrase which a monkish interpretation of love wrought into the Christian marriage service, "With my body I thee worship." Upon the kneeling host in the Hellenic Venusberg came the inspiration of this divinity of desire, fire, but not from heaven in the clear, ruddy flames Dante saw shining from the blessed—lurid, fevrous rather, as the flames Tintoretto pictured zoning the temptress;

breath, not as of the spirit of holiness, fresh, sweet, pure, but as of the spirit of fleshliness, hot, heavy, hellish; and Greece wandered wanton in the licentiousness which loosened every bond of social order into the dissoluteness of death. Manners relaxed, morals decayed, religion died. Art glowed with the hectic flush of decadence, the flamboyance of autumnal decline. Philosophy questioned itself into utter materialism, as God, seen by the pure in heart, receded from the vision of the impure-souled. Patriotism laughed at its own folly. Men became the coward slaves of the Macedonian yoke, women the wantons who made Corinthian virtue the synonym of shame; and the altar of Aphrodite smoked with the sacrifice of a nation's life.

Venus di Milo or Venus di Medici, one or the other, will a beautiful womanhood be to every nation; beauty of the soul, strengthful wisdom and purity divinely gracious, laying its charm upon men, drawing from them the homage of aspiration, in which manhood's might is inspired into noble character and consecrated to heroic labor; beauty of the flesh alone, laying its subtle spell upon men, drawing from them the homage of passion, in which manhood's honor of noble service is sacrificed for ignoble pleasure—Omphale binding Hercules in effeminate idleness at her feet while Greece groans under misrule, Delilah lulling Samson to soft dreams while Israel suffers in slavery, Cleopatra holding Antony in fatal inaction while the empire of the world slips from his grasp; fashioning each, for weal

or woe, the manners and the morals of a people; weaving the habits of men into the burning robes which, as of old, eat remorsefully into the flesh the slow sting of sin. or into the glorious garments in which the pure tread lightly the streets of the city of God, the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven upon earth, walking no more for ever after the manners of the nations cast out before them.

> "Subsists no law of life outside of life,
> No perfect manners without Christian souls."

When, in that exquisite series of parables shadowing sense at war with soul, Tennyson tells the tale of the failure of the royal Arthur, forget not its inner secret. That is the story of society's failure, through the failure of woman to clothe the knightly court with modesty and honor. Other fashions far did those fair ladies set, in idle pleasure and wilful dalliance; and after the patterns of these *modistes* of manners society shaped the habits wherein the strong arms of the "best and bravest" were fettered so that they could work no noble deed, and their feet meshed that they could keep no step with the life of their glorious leader in his walk with God; and the land lapsed back into chaos of evil. It is rather the pathos of the parable than the power of the poetry which invests that thrilling farewell scene between Arthur and Guinevere with such intensity of interest; the old Malmesbury Abbey, whither the sad-souled queen had fled for refuge, when the throne her own hands had undermined fell beneath

her; where in bitterness of spirit she vainly mourns the ruin she had wrought; the cold, hard stones of the cloistered walk upon which, crouched in abject shame, convulsed with tumultuous agony of grief, lies the prostrate form of the imperially moulded woman, over whom the kingly manhood stoops, tremulously tender, sobbing out the wail of wasted work for the weary world—

"And all through thee."

VI.

THE ANGEL; THE MINISTER OF MERCY:

WOMAN'S WORK IN PHILANTHROPY.

THE MINISTER OF MERCY.

"AND there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him."—LUKE 22 : 43.

No eulogy of woman is more common than that which pronounces her an angel. After-dinner speeches, waxing eloquent over the regular toast, never fail, amid the due succession of wholly novel epithets and similes, to evolve this sentiment with perennial freshness. One variety of epistolary literature, supposed to constitute a considerable part of young women's reading, abounds in this homage of the individual specimen of womanhood addressed. Our fair friends seem to have accepted quite naturally this exaltation to the supermundane heights of angelical being. But it may be questioned whether their adorers have distinctly visioned the form angelical with which they clothe the objects of their homage ; or whether the happy recipients of this sweet flattery realize accurately what it is to be an angel.

The only source of any information we possess concerning these exalted beings reports little as to their looks, though much about their spirit ; mirroring the

forms of those who move buoyant through the upper spheres, less as things of beauty than as souls breathing what Master Hooker called "angelical dispositions." The Scripture angels are no flattered and *fêted* pets of the court of heaven, but busy workers amid the scenes of suffering and sorrow upon earth; messengers plying to and fro between the upper and the lower worlds in the commerce of helpful sympathy; ministers of the divine mercy to human need; pitiful attendants upon the oppressed, the afflicted, the tempted; shapes beautiful indeed, but with the radiance of the gracious spirit of the Comforter. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation?"

Alone in a retired grove, kneeling upon the grass, in the soft shadow which the full moon cast from the gray-green leaves of the old olives, a man wrestles with a great and terrible horror. Alone, yet not wholly unbefriended; for in the drear loneliness of the midnight misery a gentle presence makes itself felt in sympathy; a soothing, supporting hand seems laid upon him; and looking up, through the silver-sheen of the moonlight, a lustrous form outlined its shape against the dark background of the thick-trunked trees, "and there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." This is always the condition of the angelic manifestations. These spirits materialize only against a dark distress, and always as ministrants of mercy. They are seen in the night

bringing light. Human need draws them from heaven, with the balm of the trees that grow by the river of life.

> "With silence only as their benediction
> God's angels come;
> Where in the shadow of a great affliction
> The soul sits dumb."

Those who are to "be as the angels" find their transfiguration under the same conditions. Humanity lies prostrate in weakness and woe; and it is this sad sight which stirs the "angelical dispositions" in the soul of woman, draws her forth into the shadow of suffering sorrow where help is needed, and, through the rain of tears from the weeping eyes, makes the gentle, gracious goodness ministering comfort appear to man as "an angel from heaven, strengthening him."

The young girl, brilliant and beautiful in the sunshine of prosperity, passes through some of the painful experiences of life out into the shadow of sorrow; and in the darkness grows luminous with gentle grace, looms large in patient, pitiful power, dilates into the stature and glows with the radiance of those blessed ones who stay not to sit serene in the sun of heaven, but wing their way to the world where hearts lie chilled in the gloom of grief and souls succumb under the strain of sin, bringing somewhat of the warm light of God's own presence, somewhat of its strengthful air. This vision rebukes any light and fulsome flattery in that

homage which is paid the soul of womanhood, when in true reverence we crown her with the august title—Angel.

> "O woman! in our hours of ease
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
> And variable as the shade
> By the light quivering aspen made;
> When pain and anguish wring the brow,
> A ministering angel thou!"

In woman's nature lie the qualities which develop naturally into this saintliest ideal of womanhood, the ministrant of mercy to the miseries of man. Hers is the emotional, affectional hemisphere of humanity; and all her sensitiveness and susceptibility, her power of realizing by imagination the sufferings of others, her quick intuitive sympathy, her warm overflowing pitifulness, her gentleness of touch and tenderness of tone, her graciousness of presence—are powers which fit her for this ministry of comfort. Within the superficial pleasure-loving of the young girl lie unsuspected depths of passionate aspiration for a life of self-sacrifice. The unselfishness which prompts the true woman, in the daily life of the household, to the numberless little self-abnegations that man accepts as so natural for her, but finds when essayed so hard for himself, yields her that subtle satisfaction in giving up for the loved husband, father, or child which turns her life into an habitual self-abnegation; the prelude so often of that solemnly glad sacrifice in which the

fires of some great sorrow offer up a saintly life to the service of humanity.

Indeed, by that condition of polar oppositeness through which all existence completes itself, the very abandon to joyous pleasure that characterizes the young girl, keying her life to smiling song, seems only the antiphon to the pathos of the awful song of those angel-souls who gather closest round the throne of the Lamb. Given the inspiration of a deep, passionate love, and any true woman will dilate into the angel form. For individual women here and there, earthly affection works this transfiguration. For womankind at large, the soul of womanhood as a force in social evolution, Jesus Christ has wrought this sublimation.

As an historical fact it has been Christianity which has transformed woman into the high and holy power of philanthropy which she is to-day. In the world-old relations of sweet affection and gracious duty, every people winning civilization have had the ideals of the lady, the queen, the mother, the social *modiste.* In these universal bonds of homely love, the true woman-heart has always found outlet for its sympathy and helpfulness, its ministry of comfort among the shadows which fell on Nineveh and Thebes, on Athens and Rome, as darkly as on London or New York; and when sorrow entered the home, by the side of the sick parent, the anxious husband, or the suffering child, there appeared how often, "an angel from heaven, strengthening him." But all around

and below the quiet homes wherein women rose so graciously comforting, there were, in the old-world civilizations, outlying masses of dark shadow-life; the sunken strata of human existence upon which the surface society, alone noted by history, has ever reared itself; where in need of body, mind, and soul, in hunger and disease, in the sufferings that troop after ignorance and the sorrow that haunts sin, men and women wearily dragged out their shortened days. Yet scarcely anywhere in the annals of the ancient world have we the record of the angelic going-forth of gifted women, from their heaven-homes, to serve this want and wretchedness and woe. Society felt no organic oneness with the wretched life of the unhonored members of the body politic; thrilled through the wise and strong and good no sense of sympathetic suffering in the miseries of the multitudes, who toiled in the scorched fields around the elegant villa, or stifled in the hot tenements crouching under the shadow of the palace walls. Women, gentle, gracious, good, walked within their gardens unconscious of the sobs and tears without the gates. Womanhood's noblest powers lay dormant forces in society's evolution. The masculine faculties were called into exercise in the mastery of nature and of men; and philosophy, art, science, warfare, government, jurisprudence, ethics reached a noble development. Man was emancipated, educated, ennobled. The ideals of manly power are behind us, in those magnificent heads of actual Romans which in the Louvre shame

our modern manhood. No heads of real women comparable in ideality have come down to us from the past. The higher ranges of feminine faculty were unevolved in the classic ages.

Womanly power of thought and action, womanly influence as a social force, began the development which is advancing so rapidly now in our western civilization with the introduction of the Spirit of Christ into history. The ideal of human perfection visioned in Jesus vivified the soul of womanhood. Woman's instincts of sympathy and pity, her impulses of kindness and love, her inner promptings to ministration, her secret hunger for self-abnegation, her aspirations after an ideal other far than that the wisdom of man had fashioned from his own nature, found at length a glorified realization in One who came, with divine authority, revealing the possibilities of transcendent power and nobleness possible to her, transfiguring her being.

Above the ordinary, human beauty of woman rose the awful loveliness of the angelic spirit which mirrored her inner, divinor form in the eyes of Christ. That strange, sad story of the Man of Nazareth laid subtle hold of her soul. The Spirit of Jesus Christ called upon her responsive spirit to follow Him, in His sacrificial service of humanity. Obedient to the call of that Spirit she rose, aspiring for His angelical dispositions, and found his angelical power. The ministry to man's miseries emancipated her from social slavery, enfeoffed her with mental faculties ; and in the nascent order rising upon the earth she took her place as the

peer of man. The annals of the early church record the new powers developed in woman, and the new social status they won for her in the Christian republic, under the inspiration of that holy enthusiasm of humanity which led her forth in the ministry of mercy. A novel salutation in ancient literature was that of a certain letter to a society already making a stir in the Imperial City—"I commend unto you Phœbe, our sister, which is a servant of the church, for she hath been a succourer of many. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labored in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord."

In the order of deaconesses woman took official rank in the young society, and through the personal power of her piety and philanthropy pushed herself to the fore-front of the blessed company of saints, the noble army of martyrs,

Through the long night which followed the setting of the Roman civilization, amid the gross darkness which covered the people, to multitudes of the poor and sick and sinful there appeared angels from heaven, strengthening them; glimpses of whose comforting presences, moving through the gloom of that wretched age, we still catch as we look back, thanking God for the holy women ever found in the church, following the blessed steps of His most holy life who "went about doing good." In the fresh morning of our modern era society exalted woman as never before in the history of the world; and chivalry drew its inspi-

ration to all manly nobleness and heroism from the ideal of pure womanhood the Spirit of Christ had breathed out to large-browed majesty, in the sex once merely the toy or slave of man. Yet even this homage of knights and warriors to the glory owned in womanhood is traceable, largely, to the impress made upon man by the transfiguration beheld below the castled hills, where life played so gaily; as, from their pleasant heights, fair women and noble, forsaking joust and tournay, stripping off rich robes and costly jewels, came cheerily down to minister among the squalid hovels of the rabble, who starved and sickened and died with the beasts around them, like the beautiful beings sent forth from the upper courts to the weary world.

The essential characteristic of our age is its philanthropy. Its material development does not so completely differentiate it from all preceding eras as does the spirit which burns in our poets, weaves the plots of our novelists, inspires the eloquence of our orators, reconstructs our laws, revolutionizes our governments, converts our churches from dogmatism and ecclesiasticism to that enthusiasm of humanity which heralds, prophet-voiced, the "good time coming."

It is the issue of the long travail of Humanity with the spirit begotten by Jesus Christ. A divine love of men is back of all the forces which through science, education, politics and charity are co-operating towards social regeneration. All human energies are bending to the task of saving the lost; helping the

poor out of the poverty which entails all evils; healing the diseased and deformed, whom earlier ages doomed to the non-survival of the unfittest; educating the ignorant into the knowledge which is life; reclaiming the vicious and reforming the criminal; changing the conditions engendering poverty, sickness, ignorance, vice, and crime; so that the coming generations may rise, each upon the other, in normal development towards the perfect manhood, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Social Science—the last and highest reach of man's aspiration — is the spirit of Christ energizing the human intellect unto the evolution of the laws of salvation, the conditions for preventing *en masse* that loss of all that is distinctively spiritual in man from which the church is rescuing individuals.

It is in our civilization, therefore, that woman enters upon her real emancipation and education. Its genius appeals to the distinctively feminine faculties, the powers of loving sympathy, of pitiful help—the spirit of self-sacrifice. Its tasks feed woman's energies, develop her capacities, and in calling upon her heart call forth her mind to its long latent life. As an actual fact, woman's position and power in modern society are the result of her devotion to the ideals of angelical power opened upon her in Jesus Christ. The inspiration to womanly activity, in the various fields of noble toil, is breathed forth from the lives of those women who are heroically serving suffering humanity, with their faculties of thought or action.

The pioneers of the true woman's rights movement are found in the medical profession, among hospital nurses, in our schools, upon our charity boards, at the desk, doing some brave work for human interests.

This nineteenth century has already numbered more women in the roll of the immortals than the whole array of the centuries before us; and most of them have won their canonization in the ministry to the miseries of man. Their apotheosis has been in the transfiguration of the woman into the angel.

Nothing enlarges the being like the inspiration of a great mission, the possession of the soul by a grand idea, a lofty sentiment, a noble enthusiasm. It is the highest of all inspirations which is now developing womanhood so marvellously; not the zeal of *our rights*—which never yet ennobled any class, but the zeal for *other's wrongs;* the fire which draws the halo round the brow of every heroic, saintly soul of earth.

The thraldom of woman is not primarily the yoke of unjust custom or of legal disability, under which she has suffered through the centuries. It is the doom of a lot exhausted of mental ozone, in whose stagnation the forces of her nature have failed to find that action which is liberty and life. Hawthorne keenly noted the fact that, very often, the women who throw themselves upon the woman's rights movement have been failures in their previous careers. That is only the reverse way of saying that the common lot fails for the development of uncommon women. The larger lot naturally opening for most women is not

the platform but the altar, the sacrificial service of the suffering and sinning which is the discipleship of Jesus Christ. Angelical power and honor through angelical dispositions and actions—this is the destiny the age holds out before womanhood.

Let us survey the world of human need as it lies before us to-day, and observe how everywhere the practical problems of philanthropy are calling upon the heart of woman and thus calling forth her mind; revealing to suffering man "an angel from heaven, strengthening him."

I.

The ministry to the physical want and suffering of man is the first call made upon philanthropy. This is a need patent to all, appealing to all. The heart untaught in sorrow's school may not divine the secret suffering of the soul, but any kindly eye can read the story signed in the wan face, the wasted form, the weary groan.

(1.) There is the stern fact of poverty, the want which shivers half-clothed and sickens half-fed; which looks down piteously into the hungry eyes of the little ones, and is stupefied into vice or maddened into crime. It is a world-old fact, discoverable among the ruins of every great civilization. It was this want which, in the cities of the Mediterranean, drew out the activities of the early church and developed the order of deaconesses. This was the sore need which made the mediæval church exalt alms-giving

to so high a place among the virtues; and created the sisters of charity, the living embodiments of that traditional English symbol of charity—the woman giving loaves of bread to the hungry. This is the dreadful distress which, in the over-crowded cities of our modern civilization, presents the problem that appals the stoutest-hearted philanthropist. Despite all our modern improvements, our enormous increase of wealth, our multiplied industries, our general education, our protean charities, the poor we have still with us, in multiplied misery.

There have been no lack of zealous efforts in behalf of poverty, through the churches and through other associations, in all of which woman has been active; but these labors have been largely illustrative of zeal without knowledge; good feeling defeating its own desires by its unwise methods; benevolence working no real beneficence; charity feeding with one hand the want it fostered with the other. We are beginning to see that soup-tickets are not the symbols of the divine charity; that alms-giving is not the real love-giving; that the best gift is no thing, food, clothes or money, the fee-simple of all things, but a spirit, and its outer habiting; that the true help is that which stirs and guides to self-help, which inspires the hope and ambition of improvement, and trains in habits of foresight and thrift. This nobler form of charity breathes the old, sweet spirit of sympathetic pity and gentle helpfulness, but acts in new methods of wise and stern guardianship.

It is finding its embodiment in woman, who has always had the instincts of mercifulness, the tact of helpfulness, and is now rapidly developing the powers of administration, which, with her old qualities, promise the solution of this persistent problem. Men talked and schemed in London about organizing its lavish charities, but it was a woman who first brought together the relief agencies of a great district in harmonious co-operation; setting the pattern after which the other districts of that city are working wisely, and other cities are moulding their systems. It is a group of noble women, such as in other ages would have devoted their lives to society's elegant play, who are to-day most successfully studying the problems of charity in our own state and city, and patterning the models of relief-work by which, in different parts of the land, a reform of existing methods is being accomplished.

In the actual work of relief, as in the study of its principles and methods, woman is proving herself the representative of this higher charity. She fulfils the conditions for its true action. She it is who has the time for that individualizing of help without which it never can be wisely given; the sympathy to make the aid reach through the body's want to the spirit's need; the tact to deal with the difficulties of such assistance as by no rules can ever be done; the varied qualities which, when duly trained according to our best wisdom, make of woman the realization of that beautiful eulogy—"a succourer of many." In every

Christian congregation this work is falling increasingly upon women, who, with or without the name, are reviving the ancient order of deaconesses, the official ministrants of the church's charity.

When women will be ready to fit themselves for this duty, as for a specific vocation requiring its own special powers and their careful culture; when in each congregation one woman shall rise up, with head and heart big enough to grapple with this problem; withdrawing from the multiplied good works which now distract the attention and fritter away the energies of our best laborers, in order to consecrate herself to this one special life-labor; keeping abreast of the ever-advancing wisdom of our social studies, as they bear on this subject; putting the whole force of her strong personality into the executive administration of her church's charity: when around her, as a worthy leader, the younger women of the congregation shall gather to be trained in visiting, investigating, counselling and aiding the poor; and under her shall carry, as now, the active sympathy of personal ministration to the homes of the poor; guiding and restraining it by intelligent knowledge of the principles and methods of wise relief; and warm human love shall for Christ's sake succour the poor, for Christ's sake succouring them rightly; then will this puzzling problem find a simple solution.

To be an archangel in such a "goodlie companie" of ministering spirits is an ambition noble enough, surely, to call forth the full devotion of the powers of

gifted women, in an enthusiastic acceptance of a veritable vocation.

The institutional relief to poverty found in orphanages, folds and asylums, which gather children into large families, makes that call upon woman's educative faculties of which I shall speak presently.

(2.) Sickness and suffering constitute a large portion of the misery which man experiences in his physical nature. How large, how dreadful, a factor in man's misery these "ills that flesh is heir to" count, one will begin faintly to realize who makes a tour of our hospitals and dispensaries, and sees with his own eyes, and hears with his own ears, somewhat of the wretchedness which disease and injury cause; and who then will exert his imagination to reproduce such suffering through the cities that everywhere crowd the earth. The world will appear to him one vast lazar-house, whose groans ascend harsh, discordant in the music of the spheres. No wonder the angels hasten from heaven. It would be unbearable if the life that draws full-breathed power, in the atmosphere of the Divine Presence, could not thrill forth pulsations of pitifulness, could not bear down on soft, shadowing wings somewhat of its healing peace.

The ministry upon suffering is pre-eminently the function of the sex most nearly imaging the "angelical dispositions." A man seems out of place in a sick-room. His eye is slow to divine the wants of the sufferer, his movements awkward and heavy, his touch unsympathetic, his presence unrestful. When the true

woman enters, observant of every little detail, lightly stepping round the room, unfailing in tact, with healing in her touch and soothing calm in her presence, the patient knows that Mother Nature's own nurse has come, and the doctor finds his drugs acting like a charm. Woman's instincts have long drawn her to this ministry upon sickness, and are now fashioning it into a high and holy vocation, calling forth her noblest powers. How divinely gracious rise the forms of the women who, weaned from ordinary interests by bitter heart-emptyings, have, through the centuries, consecrated themselves, in the Sisterhood of Mercy, to the service of suffering; have deliberately accepted it as the occupation of life, and, for their strengthening and stimulating in this life-consuming labor, have bound themselves into orders whose fellowship should be in the spirit of Gethsemane's Man of Sorrows; and, drawing round them the curtains, shutting out the bright world where health and wealth rejoice in life, have shut themselves within that other world where the sun seems not to shine; and amid its dark shadows have patiently, heroically moved till, angel-wise, they have risen upward towards that land where there is no more sorrow nor crying, where God Himself with His own hands doth wipe all tears from every eye.

Wars alas! have ravaged earth through all history, and countless battle-fields have known no other angel-presences than those of the unseen ones, who, in shuddering pity, have hovered over the heaps of the wounded, to minister in such wise as spirit might to spirit;

and through the long lingering lapse of life the torn limbs have throbbed with torture, and in their own blood the brave have lain a-dying. It was for our age to draw out after the embattled hosts of men the noble army of ministering spirits, seen, by the glazed eye of the dying soldiers, stooping with motherly comfort beneath the folds of the field-tent, as very angels of God; heard in the wards of the camp hospital whispering peace.

A number of years since I made a pilgrimage to a modest house embowered in the luxuriant foliage of Derbyshire, and bore with me, from one of the many clinging ivy-vines of Lea-Hurst, a souvenir of the woman who has won her canonization in the calendar of Humanity, as the first who led her sex to the systematic service of suffering in the train of war. A modest, retiring woman, feeble and sickly, she heard in her lovely English home the wail of the wounded in Scutari; and waited for those who were strong and well, experienced and trained, to answer with their "Coming!" that cry from the Crimea. She heard only the unsympathetic response of uncultured hirelings, accepting the disagreeable and dangerous duty for its pittance of pay. Catholic France sent her Sisters of Mercy, but Protestant England seemed to have no merciful sisters, willing in the love of Christ to devote their cultivated womanhood to attendance upon the revolting sufferings of the common soldiery, in the far off land. And the spirit of the Lord rose within her, the frail form dilated

with the divine love of a great woman-soul, as, to the astonishment of society, she offered herself to the government, for the charge of the fever hospital near Constantinople. Thither she went duly, taking with her a head to order the nursing of the sick into a science of healing, a will to energize the ordinary nurses with somewhat of her own aim, a heart to diffuse through all the wards a new and gentle sympathy, a soul to inspire the dying with hope and peace; and, mindless of fatigue, of danger, of the sickening sights of suffering that met her eyes on every hand, she moved to and fro a veritable angel, bringing heaven near, and softly shadowing parting souls with the presence of an Almighty Love.

"Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

And slow as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly,
The vision came and went,
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A lady with a lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic Womanhood."

Nor in the history of England alone. A noble life throws its light far and wide. Florence Nightingale has been an inspiration to all Christendom.

When our civil war came upon us, that inspiration breathed out the large statured forms of the women whose names are immortal in America. We too have our heroines of war, the angel host of ministering spirits on the field and in the hospital; illustrious women —Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Barlow, Miss Barton, Miss Dix and their sisters in the "noble army of martyrs." Now when men will fight, the world expects that women will minister; and the battle-fields of the Franco-Prussian war and of the terrible contest lately raging between Russia and Turkey have been gently clouded by the waving wings of these earthly angels, soothing the sufferings of the wounded and sustaining the spirits of the dying. War's worst horrors are disappearing under woman's organization of the ministry of mercy.

From that grand act of Florence Nightingale, with the bountiful upspringing which follows all good deeds, came a less picturesque but even more important service to humanity. When she returned to England it was with mind and heart intensely awake to the need of a thorough reform of the sys-

tem of hospital nursing; and amid a people stirred with generous enthusiasm to follow her lead in any movement.

What the professional nurse was in England we can discern beneath the broadly drawn figure of Sairey Gamp; the caricature following only too closely, as we now know, the lines of the actual ministry of unmercifulness. To the task of creating a real vocation of nursing and of investing it with honor Miss Nightingale gave herself heartily. From her country home, amid constant weakness and weariness, that rare soul energized and guided this blessed reform; and now in England and in other lands—as notably in our Bellvue Training School for Nurses—women are receiving systematic training for the noble vocation of nursing; and are carrying their educated service, beneficently, into hospitals and asylums and the homes of the poor. Not a romantic or picturesque life-work, but quite angelical!

What a life-story is that which Florence Nightingale has given to the world, of one who proved a worthy lieutenant to such a captain. A girl, young, witty, attractive, in full joy of health, living at home with her mother amid the comforts of moderate wealth, feels within her the stirrings of an unrest which strangely moved her soul. A real love for Christ, burning in her heart, fashioned in the forms of its kindling flames a vision of suffering humanity, ever beckoning her to come and help. She began to engage in the relief of the needy round about her

home — wise and true in thus taking up the simple, lowly duty which lay at her door. Amid this ordinary work she heard the call of her Master to a more absolute consecration unto the ministry of mercy. The thought of the wretchedness of London haunted her, with the fascination which humanity's need exerts over those in whom the spirit of Christ is really born. She went up to the great city and worked awhile in some of its charities; and soon realizing how little could be done in irregular, untrained service, she solemnly determined, after long thought and prayer, to give herself wholly to a life-ministry of mercy, and to educate herself for it, as for a real vocation. In the famous institution on the Rhine for training women in the vocations of teaching, nursing, etc., Kaiserswerth, she pursued a thorough discipline; and then returned to London and entered St. Thomas's Hospital, in the lowest grade of nurses, in order to acquire thorough mastery of the practical details of her calling; working her way regularly up until her eminent ability placed her at the head of a smaller hospital. The service of this institution she thoroughly re-organized, to the astonishment of all acquainted with it; charging the fifty nurses and probationers with her own spirit. Thence she went to Liverpool to take charge of the city workhouse, and rule a little kingdom of twelve hundred souls. In three years she brought this most disorderly community to a state of disciplined improvement which puzzled the police, converted the vestry and the Poor

Law Board to her views, and roused the community to carry on the beneficent reform. She died comparatively young, known throughout England, and loved and honored wherever known; followed to the grave by the blessings of the multitude of miserable sufferers unto whom, amid their dark, chill shadows, she had graciously appeared as "an angel from heaven, strengthening them."

No rare gifts were hers, but the strong head, the vigorous will, the sympathetic heart she possessed, were thoroughly consecrated to the service of humanity; and therein lay the secret of her success. While in the superintendence of the hospital in London she wrote home: "I am going to take three months more training in St. Thomas's Hospital, *as soon as I can get a holiday.*" The spirit of her life was expressed in one of her early letters: "I want a life-work to employ the faculties God has given me. They are not many nor great, but they are His gifts, and I desire to devote them to His service." Of the two works presented once for her choice, she wrote: "There is no doubt which would be for the present the easier post: that is not my aim. It is—How can I work best for God." No less a woman than Florence Nightingale pronounced this lofty eulogium upon her: "More completely and unreservedly than anyone I ever knew, she gave herself to Christ's service." It was this spirit which radiated so beautiful a light that those nearest to her "expected to see a halo round her brow." Such was

the angel-ministry of Agnes Jones, the story of a nineteenth century "Una and her paupers."

The highest form of ministration to the sufferings of sickness was until lately closed against women. They might be allowed to nurse, but men alone could professionally direct that nursing. Woman should not aspire to become a physician; the practice of medicine was above her. Not even to her own sex could she minister, though the keenest feelings of womanhood revolted from the unnaturalness of our civilized barbarism. Even this obstinately held stronghold of masculine selfishness has been forced at length, by the heroic courage and the persistent patience of strengthful women; who braved the odium of social prejudice, the persecution of brutal students, and by their sheer force of brains demonstrated that women could master the science of medicine, and practice it successfully. Nothing withholds any woman, who longs to find a real vocation, from following in the footsteps of Drs. Blackwell, Putnam, Anthon and Wright, and holding in her hands that divine office which makes them the ministers of Him who "healed all manner of diseases." What a noble mission awaits such women as those who, in this church's dispensary, in Christ-like ministry, wait daily here upon their poor sisters; caring freely for four thousand cases of distress in a year, over and above their regular practice.

II.

The moral miseries of man, not so readily realized as the distress of destitution and disease, appeal even more affectingly to the soul's sympathies when once seen. They that walk in the fresh, pure air of God's presence, cannot but look with unutterable compassion on those beneath the dreadful darkness of sin. Therefore the blessed ones above hasten down to earth, that wherever a man is sorely tempted there may, in his hour of need, "appear an angel from heaven, strengthening him." Therefore, also, they of earth in whom the "angelical dispositions" stir must follow after Him who came "to seek and to save that which was lost." To go out after straying souls, to reclaim the drunkard to sobriety, to redeem the magdalen to purity, to reform the criminal given over to evil, to uplift into true manhood the neglected and degraded classes of society, became of necessity the chief work of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, the lovers of man.

The empowering for these moral miracles lay in the inbreathed spirit of the Master; the inspiration of the omnipotent love of God in man. They who could love most could save most. Where the heart was the power woman became the force.

Alike in the ministry of salvation among the unmoral classes, those who are degraded rather than wicked, and among the immoral classes, the positively vicious and criminal, woman is everywhere de-

veloping Christian philanthropy and is being developed by it to nobler stature.

(1.) Several years ago I waited in the ante-room of a parlor in London, in and out of which a constant stream of visitors was flowing; plain women, busily engaged in a great service of humanity, going forth from that inner room to penetrate the mazes of the most wretched quarters of the city, with messages of divine mercy; returning from their ministrations upon spiritual poverty for further counsel and direction; all inspired with the spirit of the noble woman officering this beneficent endeavor to "Haste to the Rescue." Within that inner room, at the centre of a complex web of wise spiritual ministration, sat Mrs. Ranyard, the originator of the system of district-visiting bible-women which covered the vast area of London with its personal, sympathetic care of souls; the story of which is familiar to many of you in the books of L. N. R.

Working among the degraded poor of the city, Mrs. Ranyard had felt the need of some mediation between the ladies who longed to extend a helping hand to the wretched poor, but too often reached forth a gloved hand — help without living, human sympathy — and the women who sorely needed a strong arm on which to lean, but rejected the aid which did not come warm with the kindly touch of Him who "laid his hands on them and healed them." She thought this would be supplied through the media of women near enough to these poor to

understand them and to be understood by them. Out of her thoughts and prayers arose the system of bible-women now adopted in so many cities, our own among others, and with such marked success.

Men have assiduously sought to find the missing link which should establish our connection with the brutes. A woman has discovered the "Missing Link" which has traced for thousands of souls their relation to the Father in heaven, and restored them to their lost sonship.

In a lovely rectory near-by Sydenham it was my privilege to spend a Sunday, drawn thither by a young man's desire to meet a noble woman whose work was then inspiring many a Christian effort. The construction of the railway system through England had developed a special class of laborers, the "navvies," who moved from point to point along the lines in a thoroughly nomadic existence; which, of course, removed them from the restraints of settled life, and exposed them to peculiar temptations, in consequence of which they had become notoriously brutal and degraded. Her daily duties led her near one of the navvy settlements, and roused her interest in these victims of society's improvement. Few people believed that anything could be done with these hard fellows; none that a delicate and gentle woman could safely undertake their reformation. She felt that a pure woman's presence might be the one power to rouse their better nature. Making the acquaintance of some of the men and establishing a

human interest in them, she soon opened, in a barn conveniently near their huts, a Sunday evening bible-class; to which at first a few rough fellows hesitatingly came out of deference to her, and others slowly followed; interest in her simple, kindly talks keeping them in attendance; her personal power stealing into their very souls, and winning a way for Him who through her came to seek and to save these lost ones. The happy results of this unpretending work spread through England and over our own land, showing to others the possibility, through working-men's bible-classes, of the same saving influence; and consecrating many a woman to the ministry of the gospel of the grace of God, unto which Miss Marsh had been thus signally called.

(2.) The salvation of the immoral classes also calls woman to the fore-front of active service.

In 1797, a gay young girl of seventeen, the daughter of a wealthy banker of Norwich, came up to London to enter upon the pleasures of fashionable life in the metropolis, and threw herself heartily into the round of balls and operas and theatres; enjoying herself especially, as she wrote, "in scandal and in great company." Seventeen years later, a sobered young matron, brought under the consecrating power of the love of Christ, through the preaching of an American Quaker, and hungering to save souls, she visited Newgate prison; where she saw three hundred women crowded together in rags and filth, suffering all the privation and degradation of the old

prison system; and the sight stirred the "angelical dispositions" and developed the angelical powers which made the name of Elizabeth Fry immortal. There was something to be done, right at hand; and soon, beneath her care, a school and a manufactory grew up within the prison walls — the provision for education and work, the dual culture God's order secures and man's disorder disregards—and a Ladies' Association was formed to carry on the reformation of the prisoners by continued personal influence. Out of this first labor of love, carried to success, a life-work opened before her. Prison Reform became her vocation. She undertook a personal inspection of the prisons of England, exposing to the public knowledge the abuses and defects of the system of punishment; making her power felt as a spur to the officials in gaols, houses of correction, and lunatic asylums throughout the kingdom; rousing a wide-spread interest in behalf of the wretched criminal classes; summoning, by the magnetism of her example, a host of angel women round her in this ministry of salvation; leaving, wherever she went, associations to seek, through steady employ and wise instruction and personal influence, to find out the souls long lost within hardened offenders, and bring them out to light and life. Not content with reforming a kingdom's action towards its criminal classes, this heroic lover of humanity journeyed several times through northern and central Europe; calling the attention of governments and of the public to the possibility

of redeeming even these worst members of society. Was she not an angel of God, going down into the outer courts of hell "to seek and to save the lost;" whose eulogy is truthfully written, if not very poetically, in the lines of Crabbe?

> "Once I beheld a wife, a mother go
> To gloomy scenes of wretchedness and woe;
> She sought her way thro' all things vile and base,
> And made a prison a religious place:
> Fighting her way, the way that angels fight
> With powers of darkness, to let in the light."

A few years ago a lady, whose power lay in no rare gifts or great wealth or high position, but in whole-hearted devotion to the service of God in man, was engaged in benevolent efforts among the poor of the Wynds of Glasgow. In her errands through these wretched quarters, her heart was often drawn out in pity for the death-in-life of some poor girl haunting the evening streets. Many a time she sought to rescue these lost ones; hopeful that, under proper conditions, they could be restored to their right minds and be found sitting at the feet of Jesus. But the favoring conditions were not easy to secure. They were not found in big Magdalen Asylums; which shut up the penitents in rigid seclusion from all interests and pleasures, and kept them at hard routine tasks that made the House of Mercy an unmerciful prison; which herded together those who should at once have been separated; which kept up, through the old associa-

tions, the continuity of the evil life; which stamped the erring with their shame and prevented the growth of any new self-respect. She felt that what was needed was to secure for the penitents real homes, in some private households, where they might be amid pure influences and helpful surroundings, and where any true purpose of reform might have chance to root itself and gather strength. Could she find families willing to receive such abandoned creatures into their midst? She set herself to enlist the Christian sympathies of wives and mothers among the middle classes of the community; in whose households her wards would not be exposed to the obstacles and temptations of the establishments of the wealthy, with their retinues of servants. Here and there she won the heart of some worthy woman, and, trusting her with the story of the poor girl brought to her, she placed a lost soul whom she had sought out where it might be saved; and, watching herself over them, had the divine joy of seeing one after another hold firm to the purpose of reformation, and grow up under the warm shelter of these Christian homes into new and blessed life.

Thus the problem of rescuing the most hopeless class of our civilization was solved by a woman; with a great thought to guide her and a great love to move her; and the story of her work and its secret of success—"The Omnipotence of Loving Kindness," went through the English speaking world; quickening everywhere new concern for those sinners whom, by

this spirit, the Master so marvellously restored of old; and calling forth the Midnight Missions, and other efforts based on the principles of this work among the Glasgow Wynds. And everywhere this work is wrought by womanly pity, overcoming the natural repulsion of purity from evil; stooping low over the prostrate form of the soul sunken in the mire; reaching down the loving hand, fearless of defilement, to lay hold of the sin-stained spirit; drawing forth the wreck of a pure being; cleansing it in the overflowing tides of love; clothing it anew in decent habits; and leading the lost one along the earthly way till, at the last, she treads triumphantly the golden streets of the city of the saved, in the robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb.

Never shall I forget the tale brought back to our Midnight Mission House in Philadelphia — itself a direct fruit of this Glasgow work—illustrating, most fully, that absolute "omnipotence of loving kindness" in the saving of the lost which a true woman wields.

A wretched girl lay dying in an evil house across the street from the Mission. Our missionary had vainly talked and prayed with her. Her heart seemed utterly hard and callous. In response to the query suggested as a final resort, she expressed herself willing to have one of the ladies of the Mission visit her. The message was brought over to the House. But who, even of the brave women there meeting their fallen sisters daily, would enter the house of shame on this hopeless errand? A lady of social position,

of fine culture, of noble presence, was on duty, and at once volunteered on this forlorn hope. Accompanying her, but keeping in the background, out of sight of those in the room of the dying girl, our missionary saw and heard that which he reported to us. Into that polluted room calmly walked the gracious woman — a bright light in her eyes, a holy smile upon her face — and seated herself by the bedside of the abandoned creature; saying, at first, nothing save some general words of kindly concern, but taking the hand of the poor girl in one of her own, holding it, not daintily and coldly, but warmly and tenderly; while with the other she smoothed her long hair, with the soft touch which always carries healing in it. Into the beautiful face of the lady bending over her the eyes of the dying girl looked up, wide opened in questioning wonder, as though discerning in their light a holy presence of help; and at length the feeble whisper came—"Would you kiss me?" Instantly, unhesitatingly, a pure kiss sealed upon the outcast's brow the merciful love of God; as though an angel brought it straight from heaven; and beneath that sign of hope the hard heart melted; and in low, broken words the sinner's confession was sobbingly sighed into the ear of the woman-angel, and through her priestly meditation into the loving heart of God. When the death-hour came it seemed as though there were other angels hovering round to bear from the clutches of the evil spirit this saved soul.

III.

The philanthropy of our age is rising over all the efforts of preceding generations towards one supreme aspiration. Its studies have been slowly tracking the poverty, disease, ignorance, vice and crime which curse the earth, back to their sources; hopeful of ultimately drying up these overflowing evils in their fountain heads. It is seeking now, not only the alleviation of special cases of distress and the rescue of individual souls, but, the change of the conditions engendering the suffering and the sin. It dares to labor for such an order upon the earth as will develop a healthy, happy, holy humanity.

And here, as elsewhere, the work to be wrought is calling for woman's action and calling forth woman's powers; "angelical dispositions" developing angelic stature of full-formed womanhood.

Education, in the fulness of the idea, holds the solution of the problem of preventive philanthropy. Childhood must have its powers of physical, mental, and moral life called forth, developed, trained; manhood must be instructed in a recognition of the responsibilities of the various relations of society, and inspired with the desire and the power to be faithful to the charge resting upon employer and landlord; public opinion must be led up to an enlightened judgment upon the cruel selfishnesses which now oppress and repress the poor, and energized to their severe punishment; above all, society at large must

be taught to know and apply the laws of heredity, towards the evolution of a sound, intelligent, and virtuous humanity.

In all these branches of education women are most active and influential; but I may now refer to only two phases of this wide work; one of which is everywhere of supreme importance, the other of which has a special imperativeness upon us in this city; in each of which woman is leading the line of progress.

(1.) Education, in the ordinary sense of the word, the instruction and training of childhood, is peculiarly a feminine function. To vivify the intelligence, to develop and culture the faculties, to mould the habits, to inspire the motivities of action, to train the conscience and solidify the will, to draw around the tender soul the all-enswathing sense of God, so that that gracious holy pressure shall shape it into nobleness and stream in upon it enriching life—this is a labor of soul-mothering, calling for the special powers of woman; the intuitive discernment, the quick sympathy, the gracious tact, the gentle patience, the fertilizing warmth of an overbrooding heart; and calling forth those powers to fuller form. Increasingly, therefore, this work of education is thrusting woman forward as the natural educator. The Sunday-School carries on such religious education as the system allows principally through faithful women. The Industrial School accomplishes its technical training in manual labor by the hands of women. Our secular schools, private and public, are employing

more and more widely the services of women. The Report of the Board of Education in this city for 1875 shows that 2,589 women were employed as teachers in the various departments of our Common School system, against 394 men. The large primary departments are almost wholly in the hands of women.

The greatest defect of our system of education has been its waste of the most important period of childhood. The earliest years are the most plastic. Every occupation in which the little ones in our nurseries engage is really some sort of an education — an educing of physical and mental powers and moral dispositions. But this is usually a wholly blind and untutored nurture; the children being left to their own impulses or the direction of ignorant nurses. Even in its most unguided form this natural education of the nursery accomplishes more than we perceive, through the merry plays in which, to the eye of the adult, the little ones idly romp. A wise education will seek to utilize this wonderful economy of nature. The great Greek long ago divined this.

"According to my view, he who would be good at anything must practice that thing from his youth upwards, both in sport and earnest, in the particular manner which the work requires; for example, he who is to be a good builder should play at building children's houses; and he who is to be a good husbandman at tilling the ground; those who have the care of their education should provide them when young with mimic tools. And they should learn beforehand the knowledge which they will afterwards require for their art. For example, the future carpenter should learn to measure or apply

the line in play; and the future warrior should learn riding or some other exercise for amusement; and the teacher should endeavor to direct the children's inclinations and pleasures by the help of amusements, to their final aim in life. The most important part of education is right training in the nursery. The soul of the child in his play should be trained to that sort of excellence in which, when he grows up to manhood, he will have to be perfected."—*Laws:* Book I. § 644, Jowett's Ed.

What might humanity come to be if some wise soul were to steal behind Mother Nature, and with open eyes watch well her secret pedagogy; discover her aims, learn her principles, copy her methods, and thus systematize for the world a natural education of infancy, through its spontaneous playfulness? Who can measure man's stride forward when from earliest babyhood the little ones shall be wisely guided in their restless activity, so that every occupation may educe some power and command some knowledge; when as soon as they can walk they shall be gathered together in cheery, healthful rooms; and in joyous social life, through songs and plays and exercises, systematically elaborated after Nature's own patterns, a physical, mental and moral culture shall be happily carried through progressive development; when the body shall be trained in healthy vigor, the senses practised in perceptiveness and executiveness; the mind trained in observingness, reflectiveness, inventiveness, the æsthetic taste cultured, the reasoning powers exercised; the heart trained in thoughtfulness, kindliness, unselfishness, the conscience quickened to dis-

cern and the will strengthened to do the right, the soul opened in worshipful affection towards the Fatherly Love encompassing it; all under the mothering of a warm woman-soul, loving children and in sympathy with them?

Fröebel was the wise soul who overheard Mother Nature at play-schooling, and the Kindergarten is the system which embodies the new-education—natural, and therefore divine. The child-garden is the beautiful nursery where a nobler humanity is to be reared, capable of self-support aud self-control; outgrowing want and wickedness. And this blessed work is wholly woman's; opening for her a new vocation, healthful and happy; wherein her finest instincts have free scope and her divinest powers full opportunity.

Already these child-gardens are gathering to their educating plays the children of the well-to-do classes of our cities. But as yet the children of the poor—who in their crowded unhealthy homes, amid their demoralizing associations, most urgently need them—stand outside, growing wild till the State transplants them to the primary school; by which time the sapling is already shaped and stiffened. Eventually the Kindergarten will undoubtedly form part of the Common School system; as it already does in St. Louis, through the patient persistent enthusiasm of one lady, who demonstrated in her own experiments the feasibility and usefulness of the system, as a preparation for the primary department, and won

the School Board to her views. Meanwhile, without waiting for the State's slow action, the Church should utilize this invaluable instrumentality of moral education. Every church ought to have, as its true infant school, a charity-kindergarten; employing a trained kindergartner, with a corps of volunteer assistants from the young ladies of the congregation.

Any woman with the love of children in her heart, and a fair measure of mental ability, if she be willing to prepare herself thoroughly under one of the true kindergartners, may find a delightful vocation; worthy of those bright angels who, looking ever down into the pure souls of the little ones they guard, do there, as in a mirror, see always the face of the Father in heaven.

Every young girl's education ought to add to the ordinary school-course a year's training in the kindergarten; thereby preparing them to lay in their future homes the foundation of education, as Froebel designed, in the motherly play of the nursery; while giving them the securest of all endowments, the command of a vocation in which, should reverses happen to father or husband, a support may be ensured.

(2.) The home is the first school; the family the real primary class; in whose spirit and habits the moulds of character are cast. The real home must enshrine itself in a house which provides the conditions for health, happiness and honor. If the masses of a community cannot get wholesome and comfortable and decent houses they will build up no soul homes; and the family will corrupt, not culture, life.

Here is the pressing problem of philanthropy in most of our great cities. Land is too valuable to spare each family a house in the heart of the city. Working-men cannot go to any distance from the centres of work. So they have to herd together in that notable institution of civilization — the tenement house; each family content with half a floor. In these badly-built, badly-drained, badly-lighted monstrosities; dark, damp, dirty; unsunned, poisoned with sewer-gas, unprovided with the conveniences necessary for health and decency; the sacred home-spirit dies ignobly out; the children sicken and suffer, succumbing twice as fast as in the homes of the wealthy; and when they live grow up stunted in physique, enfeebled in energy, dulled in mind, demoralized in habits, educated to be paupers, drunkards, prostitutes, criminals. To make the family life a true education it is necessary to provide proper homes for the poor, and to manage them so that the habits enforced shall cultivate the tenants into higher humanness. That is, it is necessary to revive a real landlordship, in which the lord of the land shall prove a true lawward, wisely, firmly, gently ruling his tenantry, as the deputy of the supreme Lord, the fee-simple owner of the whole earth; mastering the thriftless, lazy, unclean habits of the ignorant poor into foresight, industriousness, cleanliness; rousing and developing self-respect and the ambition of bettering their conditions; and, as fast as they are prepared for improvements, making their homes healthier, pleasanter and larger. Simply

to build and open model houses is only to half succeed in elevating the home-life of the poor; often wholly to fail in the attempt. While wealthy philanthropists have been essaying the solution of this problem in this latter way, with imperfect success, a woman has gone deeper than George Peabody or Sir Sidney Waterlow, and laid the true foundations for this urgent reform.

Readers of George McDonald will recall the intensely interesting picture drawn in Robert Falconer, of a philanthropic work in London which most beautifully embodies the spirit of the Master, and seems to realize the ideal of the discipleship of Jesus of Nazareth; and will recall one of the *foci* around which this remarkable work drew its orbit, a woman aptly named Miss St. John, gifted and gracious, blending wonderfully in her labors the wisdom of our modern social science with the sweet, warm, personal sympathy of the ancient Christian charity. As a dream this story is divinely beautiful. But every dream of angelic saintliness is the larger shadowing of some actual, earthly nobleness. Miss St. John's form was doubtless cast by the figure of a woman whose presence I sought this summer; desirous rather of seeing her and interpreting her work by herself than of meeting more celebrated personages of the world's metropolis. A noble looking woman, blending strengthfulness and refinement; her head expressing large mental force, and well balanced poise of faculties; her face revealing a firm will and a gentle, sympathetic soul — she sat in

her home-office, the centre of a wide-spread, thoroughly-organized, vigorously-energized work, which realizes the very ideal of Christian landlordship, and accomplishes wonders that make it to-day the pattern and inspiration for all great cities.

The story of Miss Octavia Hill's work is briefly as follows. Learning, through her experience in charitable efforts, the need of improving the homes of the poor, as a prime condition of their permanent uplifting; and divining that this bettering of the circumstances must grow out of a bettering of the life of the inmates; she bethought her of securing control of a court in one of the poor quarters, and lording this land in wise, firm, kindly rule; thus taking some little bit of the big chaos called London and overbrooding it with that spirit of law which should evolve orderly life. Mr. Ruskin, ever ready to carry out in brotherly deeds the generous sentiments of his inspiring pages, placed in her hands the funds for this experiment; and with this money she purchased one of the worst courts in London; the management of which she was to take for the owner, and act as agent, collecting the rents and overseeing the premises.

The first round of her little kingdom revealed a most discouraging state of affairs; houses sadly in repair; dirt and filth everywhere; tenants utterly regardless of the property; always behindhand in their rent; drunken, disorderly, degraded. The laws of her kingdom were promulgated—few and brief—first and chief of which was the absolute requirement of

punctuality in payment, on pain of ejectment; a condition, as she foresaw, of any education in those habits of foresight and saving which lie at the basis of temporal improvement. This was regarded by the tenants as an idle threat, and only after many stormy scenes and painful experiences did the conviction spread through the court that the lady meant what she had said. When her improvident subjects faced the stern fact that, come what might, pay-day must find the needful money earned or saved, the first step upward was taken.

She made no repairs in the outset, save such as were absolutely necessary; and, after clearing away the accumulated filth of the premises and cleansing and whitewashing the halls and stairways, she engaged one of the elder girls in each house to keep these passage-ways in good order. By slow degrees the contrast between the well-kept halls and the slovenly rooms began to tell upon the inmates; and slatternly wives bestirred themselves to tidy things up a bit against the mistress's coming — who never failed to note and praise the slightest signs of improvement. The tenants were repeatedly told that a certain percentage of the rents was laid aside as a fund for the repair of damages done to the property; and that to the extent this was not drawn upon, through their care of the premises, it should be used for such improvement of their rooms as they would like; to which desire of bettering their surroundings they were stimulated by timely and judicious sug-

gestions. As thus the interest of the tenants was identified with that of the owner, the inmates grew less wanton in their neglect and abuse of the property, and from time to time were rewarded by the proffer of a new grate, or fresh, pretty paper, or some other pleasant addition to their comfort; each change made in their circumstances, with the satisfaction following it, stimulating still farther the desire of improvement. In due time the families that were herding together, unhealthily and indecently, were prompted to desire and seek an enlargement of their quarters; favorable terms being always made for such addition to the number of rooms rented.

Alms-giving was resolutely refrained from until it was no longer expected; but in other ways a helping hand was extended to the tenants. Any jobs called for upon the premises, where they could be done by the inmates, were laid by for slack times, and then given to the men. When some living, personal relationship had grown up between the women and their landlady, they were gathered to her house each week, for instruction in sewing, cooking, and the care of children. All were made to feel that back of the stern, rigid law there was a sympathetic, loving heart; and as the poor people learned to know it they reverenced, trusted and loved it; and every word of counsel or rebuke came weighted with authority. Thus by slow degrees, the reprobates were weeded out from the court and the reclaimable were lifted up into better health, greater intelligence, and purer morals;

so that the very court took on a new and brighter look; while the books showed an interest of five per cent. on the capital invested—equivalent to about ten per cent. here.

As the success of the experiment became known, proffers of money for further investments came in upon Miss Hill; and she began to take with her on the collecting tours suitable women, in order to train them in her methods and inspire them with her spirit; and as fast as she prepared these assistants for the responsibility of a court, she purchased an additional property of this kind and established the deputy in charge. To-day Miss Hill has twenty-eight courts, with a tenantry of four thousand souls, under her general direction; each court being in the care of some lady working under her.

As I sat in her room listening to her explanation of the system, she pointed out a young lady, busied with some of the details of the books, a girl of wealth, who was training under her for the management of a court she was about to purchase as an investment and rule as a work of philanthropy. I asked her if she had any difficulty in procuring the capital for her investments; whereat she smiled and replied—"I have to keep a list of would-be investors, and call upon them in the order of their application. I could have any amount of money. It is capable assistants that I need."

What a vocation opens before Christian women, in this hallowing of the natural relationship of landlord

and tenant! What a power for good in this city awaits our American Octavia Hill!

The crying curse of New York is its tenement house system. In one ward there are two hundred and ninety thousand persons to the square mile; one hundred and fifteen thousand more to the square mile than in the most densely crowded district of London. Our houses average eleven inmates apiece; against only six or seven in Philadelphia. Five hundred thousand people live in tenement houses in this city, and a large portion of these inhabit rooms which are never lighted by the sun's direct rays in winter; and sleep in bedrooms which are never aired except from the dwelling-rooms. Seventy-five per cent of the diseases of the city originate in these tenements. The death-rate of some of the wards is double that of the wards occupied by the wealthier classes. Ninety per cent. of the children born in these houses die before reaching youth. The slow decay caused by the poisonous air of these dens gives us a special disease, as one of the improvements of our nineteenth century Christian civilization —"The Tenement House Rot." "Most of the young criminals," says the Prison Association, "come from these dwellings." The first step, then, to any permanent improvement of our working classes lies in the correction of these conditions of family life, which now engender disease, degradation and dishonor.

We need not await the tardy action of those great capitalists who might naturally be expected to charge themselves with this urgent duty to society. If we

can develop a Miss Hill, that good angel will soon find herself the archangel of a "goodlie companie" of ministering spirits following in her train. In quiet nd lowly walks women may feel their way to some uch overseeing of the homes of the New York poor, if only there be the will. Each congregation, as a philanthropic association, ought to control one or more of these tenements; put them into decent order, and place them under the charge of some suitable woman, to rule for Christ. What Church will first thus "occupy" in the name of Christ some of the devil's real estate; and what woman will first show how to administer it for its rightful Lord?

Le logeurs du bon dieu, the French called their glorious cathedrals; and truly, according to their vision of the presence of the good God. No splendid church may enshrine the divine presence, as it now reveals itself to us. "When I lay my hands on a human body," said a great German, "I touch the Schecinah." They who rear the fit houses for these living shrines and duly care for them, are they not the lodgers of the good God? Ah! it is the women to care for these home-temples that are most needed here, as in London;—though our churches are crowded with worshippers of Him who said—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"Rise up, ye women that are at ease,
Tremble ye careless daughters."

IV.

Thus does the characteristic activity of our age open a new sphere for woman. Philanthropy, the Spirit of Christ, calls on her "angelical dispositions" to minister to man's miseries, and calls forth those angelic powers which are glorifying womanhood. Humanity, prostrate and wretched, feels the touch of a hand divinely sympathetic and strengthening; and looking up to this God-sent force of salvation, in the woman-form of merciful ministry sees a vision, as of an angel from heaven.

> "The mission of woman on earth! to give birth
> To the mercy of heaven descending on earth.
> The mission of woman; permitted to bruise
> The head of the serpent, and sweetly infuse,
> Through the sorrow and sin of earth's register'd curse,
> The blessing which mitigates all: born to nurse,
> And to soothe, and to solace, to help and to heal
> The sick world that leans on her."

No young woman need now vainly sigh for a vocation worthy of her powers. If she really wants a calling of God, in which her sex's special gifts can find full employ; if she would realize the divinest of womanhood's ideals and be "as the angels;" she need only listen to the moans of suffering and sin which cry aloud for God's ministers of light and life; hearken humbly to the voice that whispers in her soul; and answer unto Him whose holy form rises back of fallen man—"Here am I, send me."

Many of you, my young friends, hear these plaints of stricken humanity, and are even now going forth, daily, upon this angelic ministry among the sick and poor, with a quiet, faithful, steadiness of devotion which makes some older hearts thank God, and stir themselves to follow you.

In the light of this evening's pictures of saintly womanhood, you may perhaps feel discouraged over your lowly work, your simple services to man. Rather let these visions of the great souls inspire you with hope and strength. They grew by natural developments of holy helpfulness unto their heroic stature. Each one mastered well some one city, before her sway spread out over the ten cities of her princely power. They all began, as every true worker must begin, with some plain, practical, petty duty, immediately at hand; and in faithfulness to the lowly lot the powers grew, which reached out to find the spacious sphere where now they move all grandly good. Aspire earnestly to do some noble work for man, but be content to find your way to it through some quiet work for God. Avoid the diffusiveness of effort which now fritters away so many women's energies, among half-a-dozen different works indifferently done. Choose carefully your work, and put all the time and thought you can give into its wise development; and it will grow around you as fast as you grow up within it. Concentrate the energies of your being into this work, and your powers will enlarge in unsuspected fulness and mature some blessed mission, seeding down earth with

richer life. Till well the corner of the Master's estate where you are placed, and He, whose eye is on all his workers, will call you to such larger field as you are fit to manage; and you will hear His voice—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

There may be some one here to-night in whom the word of the evening stirs the very depths of the being; some one who, following the purposed order of these discourses, has closed the consideration of "society;" and, wearied of its vanities, weaned from its pleasures, its sunshine gone down under some great cloud of trouble, now hungers for a deeper life to fill the void; thirsts, in a drouth of joy, for that highest spring of which the Master drank, as on his way about "doing good" he sat by the well of Sychar, refreshing his soul with living water, of which those who came there to drink knew not. Ah! that sigh for the satisfaction of self-sacrifice, how strangely it stirs in the stricken soul. The Man of Sorrow stands in the shadow of Gethsemane, with a cup he scarce can drink, inviting the world-weary ones to His banquet—"My joy I leave with you;" and, to the astonishment of those who are happy in the world, they follow Him, with a new and holy peace irradiant on their faces, blessed in the joy of the Lord. The failures of the world turn out thus the successes of the church. God moulds his saints by sorrow; leading the once happy woman of society to the altar of sacrifice, from which she would formerly

have shrunken, but whereon she mounts unhesitatingly; its flames kindling a new life within her, and shining a holy light out from her in which she stands transfigured, looming large and lofty as an angel of God. From the ashes of the dead Lucile arises the heavenly form of the Sœur Seraphine.

To meet this deep longing of the soul of womanhood, under such experiences of life, the church of Rome organized her sisterhoods; calling them that were ready for it to a life of absolute consecration to the service of suffering humanity, and strengthening them in it by the fellowship of those girded by the divine hand with the orders of Christ. Our church, recognizing the providential craving of many women for such a life of sacrificial service, and its marvellous potency of good, is wisely reviving the primitive office of deaconess and the later orders of sisterhoods. A true deaconess, a woman of ability and experience, called by God to the office and work of succouring the sick and needy; consecrating her time and strength to this life-work; training the younger women; guiding and directing their efforts; would multiply the powers of any parish, and would realize for many an unhappy woman a noble, blessed vocation. Sisterhoods need not necessarily impose any vows, beyond the promise of obedience to the rules and persistence in the work and fellowship of the order for a limited time; and surely need not garb the form with ugly and depressing dresses; but may be strictly the voluntary association of such women as are prompted to a ministry

upon the sick and the suffering, and crave the help of a disciplined life of spiritual culture; and may prove as great a boon to world-weary women and the suffering sick in the Protestant church, as they have done in the Roman.

If any woman feels moved to such a vocation, and thinks the life of such a sisterhood will help her in it, let her thankfully enroll herself among our Protestant Sisters of Charity. If she feels so drawn, let her humbly enter upon the office and work of a deaconess in the church of God; with devout joy that she is counted worthy to follow the Master in his ministry of mercy. She need not, however, assume any garb or bear any official rank or take any new name, save that which is sweetly whispered within her soul as she overcometh the world in her full consecration to Jesus Christ. All unseen of men the ordaining Hand may rest upon her spirit, shadowing it with the sign of the cross; and still continuing in her home, amid all the sweet relationships the Heavenly Father has ordered, she may, from its pure happiness, go forth the better charged to heal and to help those who are heavy-laden; carrying the light of warm, human love, to cheer the hearts chilled and darkened under the shadows of suffering and sin; even as the angels, who live in heaven but wing their way to earth, and help us most by wafting down the refreshing atmosphere of the sunned heights above.

The vital question concerning this vocation is the calling and the answering of the soul. O my sister—

is the Master calling you, through bitter heart-emptyings, to this sacrificial service? Say thou, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The profoundest authoress of our day has parabled this transfiguration of womanhood in the service of humanity, in her most elaborate poem.

The light-hearted, beautiful, adopted child of a Spanish ducal family, on the eve of her wedding to the heir of this old Castilian house, hears, in the voice of her long-lost Gypsy father, the cry of a wretched race, calling her to turn from the happy life opened so brilliantly before her, to a self-immolating mission; bidding her aid her noble father in the leadership of the long planned migration of these wandering tribes to a kindlier soil; where, ending their nomadic habits, they may by her queenly rule be inspired and ordered into true human life;—a call "to be the angel of a homeless tribe." She owns the call of Duty, but seeks some compromise with its stern demands; ready to minister at the altar though not to mount it; but the voice above her rebukes her thought to play at philanthropy, after the easy fashion of the church:

"Not to such petty mercies as can fall
Twixt stitch and stitch of silken broidery work,
Such miracles of mitred saints who pause
Beneath their gilded canopy to heal
A man sun-stricken; not to such trim merit
As soils its dainty shoes for charity,
And simpers meekly at the pious stain,
But never trod with naked, bleeding feet
Where no man praised it, and where no church blessed:

> Not to such alms deeds fit for holidays
> Were you my daughter consecrated . . .
> . . . . . other work is yours.
> You belong . . . . . .
> Not to the petty round of circumstance
> That makes a woman's lot, but to your tribe,
> Who trust in me, and in my blood, with trust
> That men call blind."

Her own hand writes the obituary of her first life:

> "My father came:
> Who means to be the saviour of our tribe.
> He calls on me to live for his great end.
> To live? Nay die for it."

That solemn consecration opens the new and higher life in which, forgetting not the joys of the dead past,

> "Slowly she moved to choose sublimer pain;
> Yearning yet shrinking:"

Knowing well that, after the vision and the voice which she had seen and heard, the old, happy life would be

> "A self corrupt with stifled thoughts
> Of a forsaken better:"

Unable, if she would, to count it

> "Good to take a lot
> That measures joy for her, as she forgets
> Her kindred and her kindred's misery."

Thus, heroically treading in the way of the cross—in which, by the slow immolation of herself, she led the

poor wanderers towards the home beyond the sea—her form, as she evanishes in the darkness, looms lofty and luminous, as an angel that had appeared from heaven, strengthening them.

"Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it."

VII.

THE EDUCATION OF OUR DAUGHTERS.

THE

EDUCATION OF OUR DAUGHTERS

"THAT our daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple:" marginal rendering, "as columns cut on the model of a palace."—PSALM 144: 12.

THE patriotic heart of the Jewish poet, dreaming of the good time coming, visioned its forms of outward prosperity — garners full with all manner of store, sheep bringing forth thousands and ten thousands in the streets, oxen strong to labor, the wealth of a pastoral people multiplying on every hand; visioned also the era of civic peace, wherein there should be no clamor in the streets; but, in the foreground of these scenes of material thrift and social order, the dreamer's eye beheld the forms of the state's true wealth and power, the figures of the sons and daughters of whom it could say—"these are my jewels;" manhood and womanhood reared in rich fulness of life; and the first petition of the prayer of patriotism rose clear and fervent,

"That our sons may grow up as the young plants,
And that our daughters may be as the polished corners
of the temple."

The wisdom of our modern world has not altered

the order of the Hebrew patriot's desiderata. Wealth of things still grows out of humanity's wealth of life. Store of riches is accumulated by the rich powers of vital beings. The true capital of a nation is — men and women, healthful, intelligent and good. The truest production is the development of such manhood and womanhood—education.

Civic order—the law established for the security of person and property, the government under which we live in peace—is the outward formulating of the orderliness within the people, the embodiment in statutes of the law-making power of the national life, the expression of the self-government won by the citizens of the land ;—"the state's collected will." The whole power of law is in this articulation of the consciences of the citizens. Law is vital order, and the true legislation is the making of lives which shall be, not lawless but lawful—education.

Wealth of things which does not grow out of wealth of life will not permanently enrich a people. Law which does not grow round a nation naturally, as the shell formed by its life, will not permanently protect a people. So that the science of wealth, political economy, and the science of law, jurisprudence, lay their foundations in the science of spirit-culture—education.

The portraiture of this science of life-culture given by the old Hebrew is as accurate as its order in the social sciences. With a free hand he outlines the ideal education of his day, of our day, of every day. "That our sons may be as the plants grown up in

their youth," vital, vigorous, virtuous; strengthful in life of body, mind and soul. "That our daughters may be as columns carved like those of palaces;" strengthful as the pillars which upbear the weight of lofty dome and groined roof, as the corner-columns which stay the thrust of massive walls; cut into gracefulness of form, polished into brilliance of beauty, as for the adornment of palaces; columnar in noble power and noble loveliness.

Strengthfulness for use and loveliness for inspiration are the two ideals of womanly education; strengthfulness of body in all healthfulness and joyousness, strengthfulness of mind in all intelligence and judgment, strengthfulness of soul in all purity and goodness; loveliness of body in all charm of full vitality and cultured grace, loveliness of mind in all sparkle of wit and glow of wisdom, loveliness of soul in all-suffusing warmth of sweetness and of light. The prayer of every people may well arise: That our daughters may be—not as the finished forms of useless beauty set as mere ornaments in the niches of the walls, or poised in idle exhibition of themselves upon the pinnacles of the temple, but — as the corner-columns, staying, supporting, upholding the whole social structure upon their strengthfulness; and, because of this nobleness of use, wrought into utmost grace of form, polished until every inner vein of beauty stands forth clear and lustrous, efflorescent into whatsoever richness of sculpture and splendor of color may crown the patient use of the pillar with the perfect honor of the capital.

I.

Through the series of lectures now drawing to a close, I have been seeking to interpret the dissatisfaction and unrest in the soul of womanhood, out of which spring the forces of the social stir circling around the sex. Upon successive Sunday evenings, I have led you through the spheres wherein woman finds room to realize her yearning for a vocation; pointing out, as best I might, what have seemed to me the possibilities of happy, honorable life-work in these "gifts and callings" of womanhood, as the lady or loaf-ward ruling the household, the queenly wife ruling the heart of her husband, the mother ruling her children, the *modiste* ruling the manners and the morals of society, the angel ruling the miseries and disorders of earth into the peaceful order of heaven. In each of these social relations woman is seen standing as the columns of a palace, her powers fulfilling indispensable necessities, sustaining all-important responsibilities, in a nobleness of use which naturally blossoms into the crown of noble loveliness—our inspiration in her beauty, as in her strengthfulness our stay. To fashion such womanhood is the problem of the education of our daughters; to form strengthful women empowered for honorable service; to refine them into utmost attractiveness of purest delight. Below every previous topic has lain this evening's theme; every work opening before women leading back to the question of their fitness for those responsi-

bilities. Are our daughters of the right material for such noble use and noble delight, and are they being rightly fashioned in columnar power and loveliness? A question, this, appealing searchingly to you young women who hear me, and who, day by day, are fashioning yourselves after some model, perhaps not much like that before the Hebrew poet; appealingly quite as directly also to you, my friends, who, whether at home or in the school, are working over unformed womanhood—it may be with far other pattern in your ambition than the similitude of the temple-column.

Some of you who have listened to me, through these weeks, may have been only flattered by the accumulating honor placed upon your sex. If so, you have condemned yourselves. The true soul receives a revelation of its ideal life, not indeed without an inspiration of cheer and hope, but, with a weighting of responsibility in this deep-drawn sense of larger life.

The crown of honor God places on the brow is of iron; no light trifle to tickle vanity, but a heavy charge pressing upon the soul within. It does not flatter—it sobers. If the ideals I have held before you have not shadowed you by their solemn seriousness, they have altered in the refraction of the vapid atmosphere in which you live, and have fallen shrunken and distorted upon the retina of your little soul. The actual woman is less stately than the lady, less royal than the queen, less holy than the mother, less nobly mannered than the modiste, less heavenly than the angel. There is no self-satisfaction in the soul which

sees these ideal forms, so grandly large, above it. But there may be gladsome aspiration, hopeful endeavor, if these patterns showed your soul upon the mount are the models after which your life-fashioning is going on.

Within every true girl lie these ideal forms. They are so imperfectly developed in most women, not through lack of proper material, but, from ignorant or vicious work, wrought with far other end in view than that of turning out womanhood nobly useful, nobly lovely. To hold the true pattern clearly before the soul of plastic girlhood, to bring these visions out upon the lives of actual women is the true education of our daughters—for your aspiration, young women, for your labor, parents and teachers. Unto which aspiration and labor let me proffer some suggestions.

II.

Physical education, the development of a healthful, vital body, is the first element of culture in the fashioning of our corner columns.

The physical life lies below all higher developments, the foundation upon which we rear the life of mind and soul, the soil out of which mental power and spiritual energy suck their qualities. Intellect and character are the flowerings of the physical nature of man. Every vocation of womanhood makes large demands upon the physical strength. Woman's work may not be as forceful as man's, demanding as much exertion, but it is more wearing, requiring greater

powers of endurance. She may not need his muscular development, but she does need a larger fund of vitality to honor her heavy drafts. The cares of the household weary her. The rearing of children exhausts her. The intellectual and spiritual powers demanded for the realization of the large-statured forms of the ideal womanhood call for vital organisms, distilling rich mental forces, sublimating the precious qualities of heart and soul which suffuse her with graciousness. To preserve her sweetness of temper, her serenity of spirit amid the worrying cares and wearying works of the home, she needs a buoyancy of health superior to the specific gravity of fret and fatigue. Simply to be the delighting presence of loveliness in our homes our daughters must be strongly healthful. Weakness is never beautiful save, in the mystic charm the shadow of transfigured death sometimes casts before it, the suffusing of the flesh with a spiritual glory. Form and color are vital beautifyings. The columns of the temple will neither uphold their responsibilities nor bear their full adornment unless they are strong and sound. The wisest teacher of the people whose forms have become our models, whose writings have become our classics, felt this so keenly that he ordered gymnastic and horseback exercise for women as freely as for men; sacrificing for the sake of healthful vigor that we rightly hold more precious.

It is in this basic education of the body that our American girls least bear comparison with those of

other leading nations. German girls, habituated to hard labor, win thereby a vigor of physique which carries them happily through life's duties. English girls out-walk, out-ride, out-row their trans-atlantic cousins. How many of our girls could bear a day in the saddle, taking fences and ditches after the hounds with their brothers? We shall find out, perhaps, when the noble sport of the anise-seed-bag is more fully popularized. We do not want for our girls the athletic development our boys have been pushing to excess; for a sounder sense is teaching us that it is not abnormal muscular power which is the true aim of physical culture, but vital fulness—more truly even for women than for men. We do need, however, for them something better than the Fifth Avenue processionals of boarding-school misses. They need, in proper measure, the real hard work at home which foolishly fond mothers spare their daughters, robbing them thus of the strength they were meant to gain in these homely toils.

They require free, joyous physical sports such as build up the full-blooded bodies of our boys. How they are to get these sports in the city, under our fatuous fear of any effervescence of animal spirits in our girls, is one of the problems of the home and of the school. Light gymnastics, musically ordered, approach this *desideratum*. The dance would realize it fully, if it were redeemed from its present culture of vanity in our children and immodesty in our youths to its original culture of gladsome, physical life, whose

grace was the innocent forms of joyous motion; and were made again such as it was when its function as a branch of gymnastic was described as "producing health, agility, and beauty," the "vital feelings of delight."

III.

Next in order in the education of our daughters I place their training in domestic economy, in the culture of the true lady or loaf-ward, the art and science of the housekeeper.

I rank it thus, partly because it begins before the girl goes to school—her plays being rehearsals for the life-work of the future housewife—but chiefly in accordance with the order indicated in the ideal of the corner-columns; whose first function is use not beauty; whose essential quality is strength to upbear their appointed burdens, not finish of form or brilliance of polish. The prime business of a true education is to educe the powers which are given each life for its necessitated burdens and ordained duties, to fashion men and women strengthful for their several functions.

It is precisely here, in the very principia of education, that we have gone astray. Our theories and practice have been based upon what Emerson somewhere calls the wretched American notion that education begins in learning to read and write. We have been trying laboriously to acquaint our children with a vast mass of knowledge, to teach them something

about all the 'isms' and 'ologies,' while leaving them in practical ignorance of that first lesson in a sound education, in which each child is taught "to learn and labor truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." The state of life unto which it pleases God to call our daughters is plainly, for the most part, that which entails the duties of the housekeeper and the home-maker. For those duties the learning acquired in the schools does little to fit them, often much to unfit them. It is very important to gain acquaintance with literature and science and art; it is absolutely necessary for faithfulness in the appointed responsibilities of life that the woman should be the mistress of the house, the loaf-ward ordering thrift and comfort and peace. She may not need to do the actual work herself but she should be able to do it in order to teach and direct her servants. There is no captaincy in the household service which is not won by ability in the ranks. Yet our daughters think to rule without serving, to manage their establishments without going through their apprenticeships, and actually boast that they have never sewed a garment or cooked a meal—vaunt themselves in their ignorance of the A B C of feminine knowledge; and their mothers like to have it so.

The result of this faithlessness in the foundation education is seen in the extravagant habits of our modern housekeeping, the careless lavishness and ignorant waste of establishments where the young ma-

tron finds herself incompetent to exercise her loaf-wardship, to teach and order her servants; and soon, wearying of her vain attempts to govern, drops her sceptre and allows her little kingdom to live without a head. It seems below the dignity of our fine young ladies to learn such common accomplishments as cooking and sewing; a wholly and unmitigatedly false sentiment of the sham lady, too proud to stoop to tasks it has pleased God to ordain, too delicate to soil her hands with the works the holy mother of the Son of God wrought herself in the home of Nazareth. Not so was it with the true lady of the Jewish poem, who moved in noble grace through her home because her strengthful ward kept well her house; all the charm of the refined lady growing round the power of the skillful loaf-ward—the rich capital upon the noble column. When adornment ceases to be a sign of use well discharged, art dies, life fails. When the corner columns only finish the house they do not support, it will not long remain the home. "That was and ever will be the best of sayings, that the useful is the noble."—*Jowett's Plato*, 3 : 338.

Our daughters do not look far enough into these usefulnesses to see their nobleness. It is rightly counted a noble work to heal bodies that are sick and suffering, but is it not nobler service to prevent sickness and suffering? Yet very many of the physical troubles of our people are due to the ignorance of those who ought to ward off these evils from our homes. That the food by which we build up our

bodies and our brains should be well selected and well prepared, that the air we breathe should be sweet and pure, are the simplest conditions of health. It is this alphabet of the science of health, however, upon which most of our girls could not stand any rigid examination; knowing little of cooking beyond what is called "plain cooking"—which generally proves extremely plain; being unskilled in the science and art of preparing varied, economical, wholesome and appetizing dishes. That the charge is not unjust let our national disease, dyspepsia, witness; let the popular feminine ignorance of the function of windows in dusting and sweeping testify, as the clouds stir round in the well-closed room and cosily settle, with finely salubrious effect upon the domestic atmosphere. Our system of drainage renders it possible to avoid disease only by the most careful attention to the modern improvements, which open in our rooms a direct entrance for the fevers that lurk unsuspected in the sewers below our houses. Is the preservation of health and life so unimportant and ignoble a duty that our girls care not to learn, nor our parents to have them taught, how to keep the home so that disease shall be kept out?

The cultivation of the home spirit, the domestic instincts, the delight in the duties of the family which makes women what the apostle characterized in a word as "keepers at home," with the instructed knowledge and the trained skill which give power for these responsibilities, constitute the first branch of

feminine education—whose charge rests upon you, O mothers. To make it fashionable to train our daughters in domestic duties would be a reform worthy of our matrons.

Nast had, some time ago, a cartoon representing the wedding ceremony in the good time coming, when it will be fashionable for girls to learn, among other things, something about their actual duties; when before a young man places the care of his health and his wealth in the keeping of the house-lady he will want to be certified that she is a real lady, a loaf-ward.

Marching up the aisle in the marriage processional are the household servants of the bride, duly armed with the symbols of her skill, the insignia of the service in which she has graduated, and prepared in response to the query "If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together," to step forth and certify, under the seal of the broom and the gridiron, her competency for the office and work of the housekeeper.

IV.

The next stage in the education of our daughters is that which ordinarily receives the name of education, the culture of their minds; concerning which, if we remember the ideal of the corner-column, certain important considerations will guide our aim.

(1.) This mental culture ought to have prime reference to that domestic efficiency of which I have just spoken. It should seek the intelligent knowledge of

the principles underlying those homely duties, and instruct in the science of domestic economy as the household training does in its art.

This is no plea for a mere utilitarian curriculum. I would lead the education of woman far beyond this foundation of homely usefulness, but not until it is well laid. To frame a system of education by the necessities of existence is to dwarf life and turn out women unideal, prosaic, materialistic in spirit if not in creed; but to fashion a system of education which does not first of all qualify for these necessities, invest them with dignity and inspire them with pleasure, is to fail in the prime aim of all education—the enriching of life with gladness and its ennobling with honor. It is to slight the culturing value of the providential order and the wisdom which ordained it. If common life is to have interest in its daily work, pride in its skillful accomplishment, dutiful delight in its faithful service—as of the child doing the will of the Father in heaven—the first excavations into the hidden depths of knowledge should be directly under the house where the work is found.

The ground of natural science on which every domestic art rests may be unexplored, and our daughters tread their daily round upon the surface of their work, with no sense of the wonders below them, of the secrets beneath the simple tasks of the household. Life then will grow commonplace and dull, and longing eyes will look out from the windows, and idle feet carry the "gadders about" here and there in search of

the interest found not in the house. As with Anodos, in Phantastes, out of the rooms in which the house wife spends her days, a mystic door may open a way into the wonderful land around. The simplest work of the household is the application of principles and forces over which the student still puzzles his brain. The most prosaic tasks weave into them threads of thought, in following which we soon find ourselves out in the all-encompassing mysteries of nature.

The first knowledge learned in the school should be that which will open below the every-day work springs of thought, to flow continually up within them, freshening and invigorating them. It should connect the "trivial round, the common task" with the larger life about them. The instruction of the school should widen out in circling lines round the centre of woman's life, the home. An intelligent apprehension of the secrets of health-keeping in our homes would lead into the arcana of physiology, the wonders of the bodily life, and of many another branch of physical science; while beneath the prosaic arts of the kitchen lie the secrets of applied chemistry; even so unideal an occupation as cooking, meaning, if we may trust one of the wisest teachers of our day—

"The knowledge of Medea, and of Circe, and of Calypso, and of Helen, and of Rebekah, and of the Queen of Sheba; the knowledge of all herbs and fruits and balms and spices; and of all that is healing and sweet in fields and groves, and savory in meats; it means carefulness and inventiveness and watchfulness and willingness and readiness of appliance; it means

the economy of your great-grandmothers and the science of modern chemists; it means English thoroughness and French art and Arabian hospitality."—*Ruskin: Sesame.*

Herein lies the fundamental error of our common school system, that it does not fit our girls for the most common necessities of their actual life; does not prepare them for their most common duties; does not open within them the most common sources of delight. In the absence of knowledge which exists, especially among the poor, as to the art and the science of domestic economy, our People's Schools should provide at once the training of the home and instruction about the home and its occupations. Its first aim should be to educe the powers of the people for their inevitable work; to clothe those functions with dignity and deck them with delight. Whereas we laboriously acquaint our girls with a superficial knowledge of many things not touching their daily duties, while we neglect to teach them to understand the importance of those duties, educe in them no power for their due discharge, inspire in them no pride in their skillful accomplishment, and endow them with no love of the tasks amid which their lives must largely be spent. We bring not out the heart of girlhood, in its instinctive capacity of homely service, fashioning our daughters into intelligent power and polishing them into grace of homely dignity, but veneer them all with one common superficial finish and make them shine with one common artificial paste of polish. Whatever we turn out it is not the polished corner-

columns of God's first temple, the home, fitted for use, beautiful in their use.

When the great Teacher placed man in his garden-home, to dress it and to keep it, "He brought," so the story runs, "every beast of the ground to Adam, to see what he would name them." "Which things are an allegory."

(2.) The second suggestion concerning the mental education of our daughters is that, ramifying, as above indicated around the home, it should open some line of study far enough to unlock its secrets and disclose its joys; should be in some particular thorough to the point of mastery.

The actual education in our schools starts such a number of researches that, with the utmost assiduity, scarcely any one of them can be pursued far enough to make it delightful or valuable. It is as though the miner, settling his hut over the mouth of a mine, were to sink his shaft and open his galleries out in every direction, pursuing no vein far enough to uncover a rich lode, and gaining from them all only the discipline of his toil. Along no one of her dozen or two of studies does the average girl track her way resolutely up to the point of mastery of its contents. Is it not exceptional to find one of our "finished" daughters who has really opened, through any study, a way to the infinite wealth of delight in the eternal truth and beauty? Most of these graduated students have not so far mastered French as to read with pleasure the classics of that tongue; have not toiled in

music up to the joy of a sonata or a symphony. It is not any impossible perfection for which I plead; it is the simple, honest pursuit of any chosen study, until that word of the Everlasting Truth is heard—"henceforth I call you not servants but friends." A wide and generous culture by all means let us have, but let us be sure that our finish *is* culture; not a superficial veneer, but the toilsome bringing out of the heart of the oak, the veins of the marble. Let our daughters drink of as many streams of knowledge as they can, that they may have sympathy with the varied qualities of life; but let them each follow up some one streamlet, till it opens the hidden spring where it bubbles up fresh from out the eternal fount; and so there be in each mind a well of water, springing into everlasting life.

Only in such pursuit of knowledge to the point of mastery of its secrets is there the yield of its powers. Half-knowledge is not power. Superficial work extracts none of the command of life which is stored up in the depths of art and literature. To have followed any research down below the surface, and to have worked well its veins, is to have treasured below one's daily life the means for self-support, in any emergency that may befall. There is always room for proficient labor in any field. It is the unskilled toilers who crowd the market-place, standing idle and hungry. No provision you fathers can make for your daughters is as secure an investment as an education in some department, carried up to intelligent comprehension

of its principles and skilled proficiency in its practice.

How pathetic is the tale every day reads us, of gentlewomen reduced to unexpected poverty, and turning over their little stock of accomplishments to see which can be put to account for bread, and then trying to transmute superficial knowledge into gold; standing tremblingly before the editor's office, waiting his verdict upon the poems which won such applause for the pretty girl in her elegant home; trying vainly to impart to pupils the knowledge of music she never mastered herself. Here are three advertisements clipped, just as they stand, from a daily paper, which have a lesson for parents and teachers.

A YOUNG LADY would like a position in an office, to take orders for Bibles, books, etc. Call on Miss R. on Friday and Saturday, from 2 to 5 P. M., at No. 100 Henry-st., Brooklyn, N. Y.

COMPANION.—As companion to a lady of refinement: best references. Address for one week H. E., Box No. 254, Times up-town office, No. 1,258 Broadway.

COMPANION.—By a lady who is a good reader and rapid writer, as companion or in any respectable capacity. Address C. C., Box No. 316, Times up-town office, No. 1,258 Broadway.

Remember, fathers and mothers, the adage of the Jews—"He who does not teach his son a trade, teaches him to steal;" and translate it into the more dreadful application to your daughters.

(3.) The third suggestion concerning the mental education of our daughters is that, guarded as above, it should be as broad and generous as possible.

With the prejudice, not quite obsolete, against learned women, no one who honors womanhood can have much sympathy. There is no real antagonism between rich culture and practical power. Real culture—the cultivation of the powers of the mind, the feeding of the soul with rich thoughts and high joys—developes strengthfulness of mind and soul, wealth of imagination and emotion; and thus makes any woman better fitted for her daily duties in the house. The discipline of study is a mental gymnastic which yields a quicker wit, a sounder judgment, a stronger will. The woman who has mastered a hard truth will the easier master a hard task. She who has opened within her inner being the springs of thought, will not soon be overcome by the drouth of the dreary, daily duty; will live fresh-souled amid the cares of life. She who has raised herself above the level of the household will the better meet its responsibilities by thus having an outlook always beyond them. The inefficiency of many women in the house is due to their having no escape from it always at hand; no opening out into the joyous air and glad sunshine of the larger life. No one can keep fresh and strong in the dust and heat of the daily duties, unless there are rootings below the sands. When worn with the clatter of the nursery and the fret of the kitchen, the weary woman should turn to the companionship of the great and wise, in her library levee, and in their presences find rest; throw herself upon the waves of sound and float out on their deep, strong currents, till the tides

of the everlasting sea pulse through her soul their rythmic calm.

Nor is there any more antagonism between culture and attractiveness. If there were, our daughters might perhaps prefer being charming to being wise. But do they not know that the vacuity of the doll's face is only pardoned for its prettiness; that her vapid talk passes current only as issuing from her lovely lips; that the true beauty is that which lights up fine features and bloom of youth with soulfulness, the sparkle of mind, the glow of heart?

Of any wide and true culture the school can only lay the foundation. The real work must be carried on afterwards. All that we may ask of our teachers is that they shall lay such foundations that our daughters may themselves pursue this edification. One of the first words to be expunged from our feminine vocabulary is the term with which the miss of seventeen indicates her notion of the relation of her school studies to her after-work, when she speaks of having "finished." In truth her education is only begun. The boy goes from school to college, and from college to his professional school, and then he learns that he is ready to learn the real knowledge of life. But our girls think themselves ready to be put into their places in the social palace, as finished corner-columns, when their mental form is roughly blocked out. As a matter of fact they are often then "finished," their intellectual growth coming to an abrupt stop on graduation day.

The signs of a more respectful estimate of women's education are on every hand. The demand for the higher education of our daughters betokens the awakening of women to the fact that their mental stature is not attained at seventeen; that they need, and should receive, developement parallel to that of our sons. We may, perhaps, distrust the co-education of young women and young men in our colleges; we may doubt the advantages in the new female high-schools, Vassar and Smith colleges, compensating the removal of our daughters from the home; and yet, if we honor womanhood, we must be fully in sympathy with the aim of these experiments towards the higher education.

The immediate step in advance for the majority of our girls is to start, at once upon their "finishing," a systematic course of reading and study, such as that provided so admirably by the Boston Association for Home Culture. Any young woman can now have the option of well arranged courses of reading, fully mapped out before her; the text books indicated in due order, and loaned where needful; with stated written examinations conducted through the mail; and can thus redeem from waste the years that follow school, and carry out the habits of girlhood into the life of womanhood. Let me most earnestly urge young women, on leaving school, to set aside two or three hours daily for some such systematic work, and to adhere to the plan resolutely. It will be one of the bitterest disappointments of your after life to find yourself too short of mental stature to keep step with

your husband, too low in mental vision to look into the eyes of the children who turn to you for guidance in their all questioning wonderment. Without some such plan your reading will be apt to sink into the distinctively feminine culture of novel-reading.

The "novel" is a classification so generic as to be difficult of criticism. It covers all varieties of fiction, from the sermon-stories of George McDonald and the character-studies of George Eliot to the cheap trash of the dime library. The higher range of fiction, pursued as a study, is a true culture, though even then dangerous for woman's emotional nature, unless the feelings it stirs are systematically turned out upon actual life. Of any studious reading of the masters of fiction there is very little; while the average stuff that pours from the presses of well known firms—which would scorn to sell adulterated foods for the body, but hesitate not to feed the minds of the young with literature eviscerated of thought and tainted with putrescence—is devoured by our girls; partly because it costs no effort at digestion, and partly because it gratifies their hunger for mental sweets and stimulants. The least harmful of this popular fiction enervates the mind, reduces it to a state of general flabbiness, vitiates the taste and leaves a disrelish for sound and true mental food; while the more pernicious portion subtly taints the spirit with sensationalism of emotion and pruriency of imagination. To their popular diet I attribute most of the thin-bloodedness of

our girls' brains, most of the unconscious lack of the old time modesty and purity of maidenliness.

The time will come when, without leaving their homes, our daughters will be able to pursue the studies of their brothers; when our universities will have their special colleges for women; when in the smaller cities resident instructors will direct, under the limitations of local circumstance, the woman's curriculum of Harvard and Yale and Columbia.*

(4.) In this mental culture of our daughters there is one branch by no means to be depreciated, though reserved for the last place among the suggestions I have to offer. That education will have regard to their loveliness as to their usefulness, and will aim to render them attractive in all charm of cultured grace. But the adornment sought will be that of the corner-columns, carved and polished as for a palace, the noble loveliness befitting noble service.

The whole question of feminine accomplishments is simply one of sound art, which is one and the same with sound morality, since there is a unity of law through all life.

(*a.*) Sound art teaches us that ornamentation must be real and genuine, that show is never to be bought by shams. That is the cardinal canon of decoration. It must tell no lies. Its first law is—truth. I have seen in a sumptuous church, not a thousand miles off, columns of rich-hued marble reared in brilliant lines

* The Harvard Annex for Women is an encouraging step in this direction.

down the long nave, and around the rough block capitals plaster laid on, moulded into elaborate form, heavily gilded and picked out in polychromatic hues. Even thus have I seen the corner-columns of society wrought into a superficial splendor of showy adornment; by no means genuine works of culture, but sham works of "accomplishments"—finished off in plaster capitals!

Let our daughters receive all the polish possible, so that it be not veneer of professional paste nicely laid on, but genuine shine through hard attrition of the heart of oak or marble veins. Let them be taught all grace of carriage, all courtesy of manners; but let their refinement be the outward expression of fineness of attempered spirits, their grace the graciousness of noble natures developed within, their gentility gentleness of soul, their courtesy delicate thoughtfulness for others.

(*b.*) Sound ornamentation is always the sign of use; its proper place in the building where architectural service is rendered. It blossoms around some faithful function, of which it is the honorable recognition. The capital of the column is richly decorated because it upholds the superstructure. The strong pillar, fulfilling its responsibility of upbearing the superincumbent mass, effloriates in beauty. The accomplishments of our daughters should not be idle fixtures ordered from the finishing shop, hung upon them barbarically, irrelevent to their service in the household. They should be, as once in the olden times they were, the sign of fitness for use, the outgrowth of power for ser-

vice. Our women should stand within the household in all the charm of the lady, because supporting it with the strengthfulness of the loaf-ward, ruling hearts in queenliness, mothering souls to life.

(*c.*) Sound ornamentation should be subsidiary to use; its beauty never won at the cost of strength. It is possible to refine into weakness, to attain élegance of form and richness of decoration at the expense of supporting power. Architects have often carried the passion for beauty so far that their columns have lost their primal function. The later Gothic cathedrals developed the love of light and graceful form and rich ornamentation at the sacrifice of the stability of the edifice; and then flying buttresses had to be thrown out to aid the weakened walls. The woman must not be sacrificed for the lady; the capacity for use lost in elegance of accomplishment. Flamboyant architecture is decadent art. Flamboyant ladyship is decadent womanhood.

(*d.*) Sound ornamentation should always show itself under rigorous restraint, its luxuriance never rioting with wantonness. A certain severity characterizes all that is nobly beautiful. Herein is the precise contrast between barbaric and civilized art. The difference between the Parthenon and a Chinese pagoda, the Madeleine and St. Sophia, an early and a late Gothic cathedral, the beautiful furniture in vogue now and the Louis Quatorze vulgarities, the Venus di Milo and the half dozen Venuses which flank the approach to this noblest of feminine forms—is

the expression of this law of restraint in adornment. Ornamentation must not be self-asserting, flaunting. Loudness is always vicious. Culture subdues, represses. Its ornamentation is of the meek and quiet spirit. Let our daughters' tone and manners, as well as their actual ornaments, be severe rather than luxuriant, civilized rather than barbaric, classic rather than oriental; the manner modest, the tone quiet, the "voice low and sweet," as "is excellent in woman," the dress not flaunting or self-asserting, the ornamentation valuable by other standards than the money's worth. The ideal for our daughters is scarcely the girl of the period, but rather far Spenser's sweetly severe vision of the virtues of womanhood.

> "Next to her sate goodly Shamefastnesse,
> Ne ever durst her eyes from ground upreare,
> Ne ever once did looke up from her desse (seat)
> As if some blame of evil she did feare
> That in her cheekes made roses oft appeare.
> * * * * * * *
> And next to her sate sober Modestie,
> Holding her hand upon her gentle hart;
> And her against, sate comely Curtessie,
> That unto every person knew her part;
> And her before was seated, overthwart,
> Soft Silence and submisse Obedience;
> Both linckt together never to dispart."

For whatsoever of false and faithless fulfilment of the ideal of womanly culture passes current to-day as education, teachers are largely responsible; whose business it is to possess the true models after which

to fashion our corner columns; whose duty it is to hearken to that inner voice—"see that thou make all things after the patterns showed thee on the mount;" the trial of whose faith is whether they will sacrifice God's plans to man's designs. Parents are even more responsible. There are to-day wise, good and true teachers, longing to make our daughters as the corner-columns, carved and polished for the temple, whose chief obstacle is not with the girls themselves, but, with their parents, and mainly with their mothers. The education of our daughters is what it is because of fashionable and wealthy mothers, who call themselves cultured, but are too superficial to value solid work, too worldly to appreciate that which does not shine in society, too eager devotees of ambition to pay for other soul-clothing than that which will grace the court of Mammon. Perhaps these worldly-wise mothers know best. Until a higher vocation awaits the finished girl than that of being taken from the school-factory to the society auction-room, and being placed on exhibition in the marriage-mart, where showy accomplishments enhance the value of the ware and draw a high bidder, and where, true to fiction, life's story ends just as it really begins, before the altar—no better education is desirable or possible.

IV.

Thus we reach the final aim of this education, the production of character, the development of women good as fair, pure as bright.

Every other culture is subsidiary to this. Physical and mental vigor are valuable as factors in this resultant. The fashioning of a noble soul is the real work of education, the endeavor of the true teacher, the aspiration of the true scholar. This is the flower unto which every lower life-process yearns.

Character is the inner root of all other strengthfulness. The perfection of physical form and power is fashioned by the soul strengthfully temperate, masterful of the forces of the body. The fulness of mental life is developed only by the soul strengthfully resolute and patient, heroic in endurance. Virtue is the true strength, *virtus*, of life.

Character is the secret of all noblest beauty. The form of utmost loveliness is fashioned only by the cultured soul within. Unless a soul draws the lines of the face, looks out of the eyes, speaks in the voice, the beauty of the belle is but that of the doll; which may be an attractive plaything, but as a toy is tossed aside when its novelty is gone. The inner grace of all loveliness is the spirit's sheen upon the flesh.

Character is the true capital for life, as with man, so, in a peculiar sense, with woman. Man, who is thrown upon the world's fierce strife, needs back of all other strength, virtue. But virtue alone will not yield him success. Whereas woman, shrined within the home, unadvantaged by special gifts of body or of mind, may be supremely happy in her hold of the hearts whose reverent love is the success of her great venture in life.

Flawed character is not always the secret of men's failures, but it is nearly always the cause of the womanly ruins whose *débris* are all round us in this great city. Many a good man badly fails; few good women really fail. The weak point which brings down her life-structure is generally some defect in her moral nature. Of her it is pre-eminently true, as the wise teacher said of old—"all good and evil originates in the soul, and overflows from thence." The "virtuous woman," strengthful of soul, though not perhaps of mind or body, vitally pure and true, does not succumb under life's pressure. But all her beauty of body and grace of mind only heighten the strain upon the weak-souled woman. The fine qualities which mark her out for the corner-column in the palace only lift her into eminency of trial and certainty of danger if she be unsound within.

Whatever other culture a girl needs to win she needs above all to be strongly good. Whatever labor parents and teachers bestow upon these corner-columns they should be sure that they are sound at heart.

Here, again, is the danger of the luxuriant development of the external life of our daughters, that it attenuates the inner life, throws the forces of the being out into efflorescence of accomplishment, and thus exhausts the soul-strengthfulness of the corner-columns. Viciously beautiful is this flamboyant womanhood, its every charm a weakness, every grace a danger. The attractiveness of a weak-souled woman

is her own snare, the curse of those who are fascinated by her. Beautiful, brilliant, brittle womanhood has precipitated the noblest societies of earth in ruin. So that the examination of our girls might well be patterned after the great Grecian teacher's review of his beautiful pupil.

"What do you think of him, Socrates? Has he not a beautiful face?

Most beautiful, I said.

But you would think nothing of his face, he replied, if you could see his form; he is absolutely perfect.

Then, I said, there never was such a paragon, if he has only one other slight addition.

What is that, said Critias?

If he has a noble soul.

Then before we see his body should we not ask him to show us his soul, naked and undisguised?"—*Jowett's Plato: Charmides.*

Ah! my young friends, to grow within you these vital, well-formed, beautiful souls, noble in the image of God, lustrous in the spirit of Christ, is the end of all our education of you, our daughters.

Do you remember how Mr. Browning makes the aged Pope speak, as, saddened in the failure of his culture of earth, he rejoices, amid the waste of spiritual thorns and briers in a corrupt age, to see one true, sweet woman-soul open in his garden.

"Everywhere I see in the world the intellect of man,
Michael's sword, the energy his subtle spear,
The knowledge which defends him like a shield—
Everywhere; but they make not up, I think,

The marvel of a soul like thine, earth's flower
She holds up to the softened gaze of God!
It was not given to Pompilia to know much,
Speak much, to write a book to move mankind,
Be memorized by who records my time.
Yet, if in purity and patience, if
In faith held fast despite the plucking fiend,
Safe like the signet-stone with the new name
That saints are known by,—if in right returned
For wrong, most pardon for worst injury,
If there be any virtue, any praise,
Then will this woman-child have proved—who knows?
Just the one prize vouchsafed unworthy me."

—*The Ring and the Book*

But these perfect woman-souls do not grow up like weeds, uncultured, untended with watchful care or patient labor. There is within you, my young friends, if you be true women, this possibility of highest beauty of holiness, but it will come forth upon you only by a culture harder far than that which issues in the graceful body and the supple mind. Gentleness, patience, humility, unselfishness, will not bear their bloom upon you unless you strive to grow these graces in the grace of God. There is many a capable and beautiful woman, vain and proud, hard and selfish. Many a sweet mouth opens only to drop gall; many a bright eye shines with envy; in the mantling color of many a blooming cheek are the tides of a thoroughly selfish heart. You know the conflict between inclination and duty, between sense and spirit, the world and God, selfish pleasure-loving and the life

of Christ. If you would win the laurel which the great teacher places on the brow of the faithful disciple you must—in all patience of daily endeavor, in all loyal hearkening to His voice within—learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart.

This culture of the soul is, broadly speaking, twofold; a positive work of doing and a negative work of undoing. It is the tracing in our lives the virtues of the great exemplar, under the inspiration of communion with his perfect spirit; and the correction of the faults discernible in our work, under the light of this life.

(1.) Of the first of these branches of soul-culture, which forms the proper staple of the general instruction of the pulpit, let me say only a word. Character is an inspiration far more than a manufacture. It is vital growth, the assimilation of the food we give our thoughts, of the elements with which we supply our emotions; and the reproduction in our lives of these qualities. Keep, therefore, before you the bright ideals of noble womanhood. Fill your minds with the words and deeds of the greatly good. Just as you would go to the centres of art to saturate your mind with the forms of beauty, so seek habitually the shrines of holiness, to inhale in their atmosphere the spirit of the saintly lives which look down upon you. These books of our Bible are the classics of character. To be familiar with them, to walk daily with the holy forms which cast their shadows upon our souls, wakening aspirations to be like them; to be looking with

earnest studiousness ever unto Jesus, the perfect soul, entering into fellowship of spirit with Him—this is the secret of the process whereby we are transformed into His image, and Christ comes forth upon us.

(2.) The second of these branches of soul culture demands more careful notice. The indication and correction of errors is the least pleasant and, therefore, perhaps, the most neglected part of instruction in righteousness. With the best models and with the most earnest aspiration and endeavor the pupil may go on repeating errors, and thus confirming habits which negative all excellence. Each sex has its characteristic defects, which a wise education will regard as carefully as individual idiosyncracies. To the neglect of these faults of womanhood much of the failure in the education of our daughters is due. We rightly think it needful to guard our boys against their special dangers; why should we not be as considerate of the weaknesses of our girls?

The ancient fault which the apostle rebuked in the young widows, who, losing the occupations and interests of home life, "learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idlers but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not"—a fault charged in all ages and among all races on womankind—is engendered by the lack of engrossing work. It is the settlings of a shallow life, in a dearth of higher interests than those found in the petty gossip of the social circle. Its cure lies in the culture of a richer mental life, the

finding of a vocation which will turn the energies of the being into other exertions than those of the feet or the tongue.

The curiosity to which the spirit of evil appealed in Eden—one of the strong instincts of the sex—often betrays the daughters of Eve. Many a girl has been led into evil by her desire to peep over into forbidden grounds; her curiosity tempting her on till she comes beneath the Upas shadow of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and her white-souled purity gathers stain and soil. In this day of painful revelations of unsuspected demoralization, there has been no disclosure so wholly shocking as the knowledge of a wide-spread loss of purity of thought and imagination in maidenhood. There are things which are not to be spoken, though they burn into the soul. These worst evils are only part of a general lowering of the tone of girlhood, the signs of which are to be seen in the prevalent loudness of manners, the license of the dance, the popular novels, the unblushing faces of wives and daughters at the opera-bouffe. I fully believe that in its lighter forms this is an unconscious lowering of tone; that our girls mean no evil and directly realize little; but the deterioration and the danger are none the less to be deplored and dreaded. Even the worst forms of this demoralization are not to be regarded as tokens of purposed pruriency, but only the unforeseen result of that over-mastering curiosity which the ancient Hebrew myth said had betrayed the first mother. There are veils, young girls, to lift

which, before the Providential hand purely draws them aside, is to shadow the soul forever. There are clouds which must hang low upon the life in reverent mystery.

The imaginativeness of woman, combining with her curiosity, creates the temptation which is so subtly worked in the passional literature of the day. From undraped evil every true girl would turn away in disgust; but from evil veiled in mysteriousness, half-suggested, half-concealed, enveloped with the fascination of romance, seen in soft lights and witching picturesqueness, innocent girls may turn not away until images are left on the retina which darken and defile.

The delight in adornment and the love of admiration, which are instinctive in womanhood, carry also their own element of weakness. This hunger for admiration prompts many a young woman to things her better nature condemns; leads her into extravagance, selfish indulgence of her tastes at the expense of her duties, improprieties of dress, indelicacies of action in society, the surrender of domestic peace, the sacrifice of modesty, the stifling of conscience. And worse far than this they know whose painful duty has called them to study the pathology of society, to explore the cloaca of civilization. Did I dare here to say things I know, the most thoughtless girl might well fear, as she binds her jewels upon her, lest there be in them the subtle potencies of evil the alchemists believed, and their brilliant light burn into her very soul, eating out her honor.

Even her divinest power, in which she can rejoice to sacrifice herself for those she loves—according to that subtle law by which the highest virtues pass so easily into the deadliest sins—may prove her greatest weakness, may play her false and betray her into evil. Is there any story so pathetic as that constantly re-told tale of the young girl, loving with such self-abandonment of uttermost trust, such readiness for the costliest sacrifice which may express her unreserved devotion, that she gives — her very honor; and then, when she has offered her all upon the altar of her confiding love, in the most fiendish cruelty of selfishness our earth presents, thrown off upon the world by the object of this self-immolating worship, a ruined wreck of being, to haunt the shadows of the streets awhile and then drop down into the valley of the shadow of death, and through its gloom into the outer darkness; darkness surely not unrelieved by hope for the soul more sinned against than sinning, nor so deep in hell as that over him, in whatever *élite* circles of the upper world of light he moves, who in the holy name of love betrayed the daughter of man to shameful death with a kiss. Our daughters must learn that not even the noblest feelings may overflow the boundaries God has set; that the purity of the motive will not estop the bitter sequence of wrong-doing; that law is a great reality, rigorous, inflexible—to be stayed by no plea of ignorance or innocence of intention, though that inner guiltlessness may leave the soul capable of the divine forgiveness and the new start

which sets the mechanism of law at work in the processes of redemption; that character inspired by emotion is to be moulded by the law of God, and that only within its prescribed shape will the fluent feelings find the form in which they can solidify into the substance of the corner-columns of the temple, firm as fair.

The ultimate security for woman's character is to be found in an external law, which, reverently welcomed, loyally obeyed, shall press round her wealth of emotion and mould her richness of feeling into columnar strength and beauty. More than man, who in his stronger reason and maturer conscience is so often a law unto himself, woman needs to be ruled by a reason and conscience outside of her, larger than herself, environing her. She is secure only when mastered by another self in whom the divine will lives; whom she accepts as her pattern; who becomes her conscience, approving and reproving; her law, saying unto her Do this; her ideal, bidding her Follow me. Her life-blessing is in finding her earthly love identify itself thus with her other conscience, become the priest of God to her. Her salvation from the danger which comes when love fails to incarnate the higher life before her is in the discovery of some one who can thus rule her soul.

Have you, young women, read your great woman-novelist thoughtfully enough to discern that her noblest women, who so powerfully sway men, move in calm strengthfulness of soul because themselves under

the mastery of a larger life of man; or fail in queenliness upon the earth because no king comes from the heavens to reign in righteousness within their hearts? Dorothea misses the splendid possibility her nature carried within it from not finding one living the larger law, and thus ordering her actual life into a realization of her noble ideals. Romola finds in the man who won her heart one too far below her to master and rule her being, and her character lies undeveloped till Savonarola bodies before her the law of life; when, pouring the treasures of her rich nature into the mould that great life-law patterns, she issues saintly-formed. Gwendolen lives contentedly in her low life of selfish pleasure till one crosses her orbit who casts upon her soul the shadow of a larger life; who—voicing her better nature and showing an ordered obedience to those laws of God which she overflows in the tumultuous tides of her sensuous nature—becomes an incarnation of divine law to her, a conscience walking outside her; with whom she compares herself, by whom she judges herself, unto whom she involuntarily confesses herself, as unto a natural priest, from whom she seeks at every step mastery of her anarchic life, as from a heaven-sent king, under whom she at length wins victory and emerges into peace.

Have you noticed how this Daniel come to judgment casts a shadow almost like that of the perfect man, the flower of his race, the Christ? To me it seems as though this great woman-soul, reared amid confusing shadows, discerning not as yet that Light

which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. deciphering the life-riddle confusedly and hopelessly, as in the dark, erring possibly in her own steps, as seeing through the arbitrariness of conventionalities but failing to discern their relation to the inner ethical life of humanity—through the forms visioned in her imagination is having Christ draw nigh, though as yet she recognizes Him not. Certain it is that she has divined the secret want of womanhood—Christ.

It is not by chance that women gravitate to our churches. Woman's deepest need is met in the revelation of One who incarnates her ideals, voices the inner whispers of her spirit, bodies before her the law of God, becomes her conscience, lays on her the mastery which is freedom, the yoke in which she finds rest to her soul, inspires a holy love which thrones in her heart a king.

Thus at the close of all that I have had to say to you, my young friends, I come round to the starting-point—the call of Christ to serve Him; the vocation He gives who saith to your souls "Follow Me;" the mission He bestows upon the soul answering aright that question "Lovest thou me?" To follow Him, in reverent obedience, is to become the disciple of the Teacher and Master of the true education: to love Him, who asks for your hearts, is to feel an inspiration to His blessed work for humanity. Are you following Christ, as true disciples? Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?

O ye daughters, over whom we pray that ye may

be as the polished corner-columns of the temple—rest your characters on the Foundation other than which no man can lay, upon the sure Corner-Stone, tried and precious! Thus will you rear yourselves as living stones in that House of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

THE END.

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